MIRABILE PEC

OR, THE

Non-Such Wonder

OF THE

PEAK in Darby-ſhire.

DISCOVERED

In a full, though ſuccinct and ſober, Narrative of the more than ordinary Parts, Piety, and Preſervation

OF

MARTHA TAYLOR,

ONE

Who hath been ſupported in time above a year in a way beyond the ordinary courſe of Nature, without the uſe of Meat or Drink.

By H. A. K.

LONDON,
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J. Jonst. de admirand. hominis ut seq; in lib.

Nutrimenti usus quamvis ad vitam sit necessarius; inventi tamen plurimi, qui, non obstante sat longa illius carentiâ, vixêre.

D. Sennert. Med. Pract. l. 3. sect. 2. c. 2.

Experientia ipsa testatur nonnullos ultra septem dies sine cibo vixisse.

J. H. Alsted. Encyclopæd. l. 13. Phys. par. 5. reg. 12.

Q. *An corpora quædam sine nutritione naturaliter possint ad annum, biennium, & amplius vivere?*

R. *Plantæ nonnullæ, ut est Semperviva, sine nutrimento aliquam diu vivere possunt: contentæ scilicet lentâ suâ succositate. Quædam etiam bestiæ, ut glires & serpentes, ob humorem viscosum intra corpus collectum, sine novo alimento, hyeme pinguescunt. Quidam deniq; homines, ex pituitâ dulci & lentâ undiq; in venas impactâ, ad aliquot annos nutriuntur: in quibus scilicet calor est exiguus, ita ut pituitam illam non facilè posset absumere. Ad hanc tamen causam naturalem accedere potest causa supernaturalis; præsertim quando septennium & amplius durat ἀσιτία; cujus exempla vide apud Historicos & Medicos.*

August. de Civit. Dei l. 24. c. 8.

Sicut non fuit impossibile Deo quas voluit instituere, sic ei non est impossibile in quicquid voluerit, quas instituit mutare naturas.

Secundum Mat. c. 4. v. 4.

Οὐκ ἐπ' ἄρτῳ μόνῳ ζήσεται ἄνθρωπος.

Ad Corinth. c. 12. v. 9.

Καὶ εἴρηκε μοι. Ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου· ἡ γὰρ δύναμις μου ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελειοῦται.

Post

For the ever Noble, truly Worthy, and much Honoured,
M. L. R. L. P.

Madam,

THese Lines esteem it a great part of their Happiness, that they may but prostrate themselves to your service: I know your experience can over-act an hear-say Testimonial to the Truth of *Martha Taylor's* amazing Story. This poor Attempt of mine may contribute something to your Remembrance, though very little to your Information; for you have seen and searcht into this wonderful Abstinent; you are well skill'd in Nature, and in the puzling Architecture of the Humane Body, as your judicious, prosperous, and charitable Applications

do ſufficiently and frequently demonſtrate; and then, which is your greateſt glory, you are well acquainted with the urgent Buſineſs, and profound Concerns of another World. Your more than ordinary Candor, free Entertainment, and numerous Courteſies conferr'd upon (immeritorious) Me, when I did twice or thrice viſit your Country to take a view of this wonderful, aerial, foodleſs Creature, hath begot this Preſentment, or, may I call it, mean and barren, Remuneration, from him who is, and will be

March 30. 1669.

Your Admirer and Humble Servant, H. A.

TO

TO THE READER.

Reader,

MAny *in their Hiſtories of* England *give a large and true account of ſeveral Wonders of Nature in that Diviſion of* Darby-ſhire, *which is uſually call'd,* The Peak; *a Country, much noted for its uneven ſurface, being all over ſhattered into deep and fruitful Vales, ſhagged Hills, vaſt and barren Rocks, and Skie-invading Mountains: from which Mountains it got its name; for it ſignifies,* To appear aloft. Camden *in his* Britannia *relates its Commodities, its Ornaments, its Wonders.* Speed *alſo in his* Maps of England, *doth the ſame. But none ſo particular as Mr.* Hobbs *in his ingenuous and well-compos'd Poem,* De Mirabilibus Pecci; *out of whom take the following Diſtick.*

Alti cenſentur ſeptem *Miracula Pecci:*
Ædes, Mons, Barathrum, binus Fons, Antraq, bina.

Metaphras'd into Engliſh, *thus:*

The moſt, ſeven Wonders in the Peak account,
Chatſworth, *that ſtately-houſe: The* maimed-Mount
Main-Tor, *which climbs the Clouds: The ſtrang* Abyſs
Which men call Elden-Holl, *like Hell it is.*
A double Spring, th'ebbing and flowing Well:
And Buxton-Bath, *of which ſome Wonders tell:*
Two Caves there are, the one (not modeſt call'd)
The Devil's Arſe, *with wide mouth, ſtrongly wall'd*
By Natures skill, where Waters run: And then
There is Pool's Hole, *a ſtrange long wandring* Den.

Here's a Catalogue of the Wonders of that Country; many Travellers, and others have journied a great number of miles to take a view of theſe: but all theſe laid together, may bow the head, and give place to this ſo great a Wonder of Providence; The total *Faſt of* Martha Taylor. *Concerning which I writ the enſuing ſheets upon the irreſiſtible Importunity of ſome Friends, who knew that I had ſeen and converſed with her ſeveral times; and with her Viſiters, Gentlemen, Divines, Phyſicians, ſome of both the Watch that were ſet upon her, and with ſome*

of her most sober knowing Neighbours on purpose to get the Truth concerning her: for I was ready at the first to suspect every thing that was reported of her; but, upon further Trial, I became convinced of the reality of what I have here given an account of. But though at present I be fully satisfied, yet I do submit these things to the further enquiry of Time and Judicious Ones. I never had any Obligments upon me from her Self, Friends or Favourites; all I appear for, is the Truth, as far as I know it. In this Discourse I must confess I did swim against the stream of my own Inclinations, Time, Employment; Studies and Reading, skill in the criticism of Nature, or Anatomy, and the Mystical Structure of the House of Clay, is really exterraneous unto me. These Papers for any thing I know, may not only be crude and indigested, but also guilty of supervacaneous Repetitions, because of their hasty Birth; and then I never saw them together, after the two first sheets, till they appeared in publick view, being carried away as fast as they were writ by the unwearied Sollicitations of an esteemed Friend. The Sections and Paragraphs are not so much for Method, as for con-

convenient Pauſes, or breathing Places, to the Reader. You may think that I have made Martha Taylor, *as to her pious Attainments, an excellent Creature, and ſo ſhe was to me, and hundreds of other Viſiters; but if the Waters have not at all times run ſo high and clear, you muſt ſuppoſe this Life has no perfection in it, as long as we dwell in corrupted fleſh, hedged round about with Senſe and various enſnaring Objects.*

If Martha Taylor *be yet in the Land of the Living, as its ſuppos'd ſhe is, I would deſire theſe ſheets may put her on forward to ſhine forth in an humble holy Profeſſion, that ſhe do not blemiſh her former ſelf, nor diſgrace that happy and fair Appearance which once ſhe made; for if ſhe do, here will be an abiding Monument ſet up againſt her. Let her conſider the following Places, and beware.* Mat. 0.22. Heb. 3. 14. & 10. 38. Pſal. 125. 5. Revel. 2. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

Read, improve, and give God the Glory.

Farewell.

THE INTRODUCTION.

PART I. SECT. I.

THE Mind of Infinite Wiſdome in the firſt making of the World, was that Humane Bodies ſhould be ſupported by the uſe of Creatures; this was the reaſon that the great Architect did in ſuch a copious manner provide all convenient neceſſaries for the ſupply of *Adam* in the State of Innocency; there was a full Table ready furniſhed for him, that he might upon his firſt approach into life, and his ſtately Dwelling, ſee the way how to maintain himſelf there. The firſt of *Geneſis* is a very ample diſcovery of this: God tells him he had not only made the inferour Creatures for his Dominion, Solace, and Advantage, but alſo for meat to live upon, in the 29, and 30. *Verſes*; nay, he gives him a command to uſe them for that end, *Chap.* 2. *Verſe* 16. Yet, though it be thus according to the ordinary diſpenſation of Heaven, it cannot be deny'd, but that God is an unlimited Agent, he muſt not be always bound up to one Method in the Actings of his Providence,

He onely can do what he pleaſeth, and which way he pleaſeth: *Many things ſeem impoſſible with Men, but with God all things are poſſible*, Mat. 19. 26. That our poor, frail, dying, Bodies, ſhould be preſerved alive for forty days together, without the ordinary uſe of creature props, ſeems to us an impoſſibility, yet with God 'tis poſſible. There are many vaſt Myſteries in the Operations of Divine Providence, that now and then make their appearance in this nether Region, concerning which the moſt knowing men are at a great loſſe, and far to ſeek; of which they may ſpeak in the language of the *Pſalmiſt*, That when they think to know theſe, they are too painful for them; or as the Margent reads it from the *Hebrew*, they are labour in their eyes, *Hic labor, hoc opus eſt*, Difficulties on every ſide, too hard for them to overcome.

Now the moſt are ready to hiſs every thing off the Stage of the World, which doth not fall within their own cognizance or experience: All things that are ſtrange they reduce preſently to their own ken, and try them by their own convictions and former knowledge, to which if theſe wonders do not bear a very fair correſpondence, then away with them, they are preſently thrown over board for Impoſters. But if theſe men had weighed them in another, far truer Ballance, the Almighty Power of a wonder-working God, then its likely they might have

have found a due weigh in this Coyn, which would have put them upon a further and better ſearch, as to ſee whoſe ſuperſcription was impreſt upon it, and what was its innate truth and worth. I muſt confeſs, there is a miſcarriage on both hands, I dare not commend an eaſie belief, nor an obſtinate unbelief, in the concern of the ſtupendious productions of Nature, to believe every thing, and to believe nothing, as they are oppoſites, ſo they are equal extreams and abſurdities; as the one degrades the greateſt Truths, ſo the other advanceth the moſt irrational falſhoods: The one hath low thoughts of the moſt ſacred Verity, becauſe there are many things in it, which are higher then the reach of ſenſe and carnal reaſon; the other hath a very great eſteem for a meer Legend of lyes, becauſe it is full of ſeeming wonders. In things which fall within the limits of nature, there's no queſtion but the moſt prudent rational way is to ſtrike a middle ſtroake, between the two dangerous extreames of unadvis'd credulily, and ſenſleſs incredulity. There are ſeveral *Magnalia* or Wonderments of Art and Nature found out within theſe two or three laſt *Centuries*, which our moſt inquiſitive Progenitors did not ſo much as dream on: Had ſome diving Head-pieces but run the venter in thoſe times to have whiſpered forth, by a probable conjecture, the hidden world in *America*, the amazing Nature of the Load-ſtone, the profitable Inven-

tion of Printing, or the like, thoſe ingenious ones its very likely had got no more credence, then we uſe to give, though upon better grounds, to them who now tell us of a world in the Moon.. The rational Biſhop *Virgilius* was in the year of *Chriſt* 745. condemned by Pope *Zachary* for an Heretick, becauſe he aſſerted, and ſtood to it, that there were *Antipodes*; which was a thing generally decry'd by the learning of that Age to be a fable, a fond, and a fooliſh thing; of this humour were *Lactantius*, *Auſtin*, and *Lucretius*, as *Alſtead* tells you in his *Geography c. 7. reg. 4.* That gallant Seaman *Magalanus*, who had the happineſs firſt to purpoſe to diſcover the vaſt *Continent* in the *Weſt Indies*, might as ſoon have perſwaded his *Country*-men, the *Genoues*, to whom he firſt laid bare his mind, that there was an habitable earth in each Planet, as one in that unthought-at Coaſt. You ſee by this time, that 'tis not the wiſe-mans part to diſcredit every thing that may lye beyond the limits of his own preſent Apprehenſions, but rather to do what he can to climb over the difficulty, and then he will ſee not only the probability and reallity, but alſo the rarity of the thing: Thus do you in the enſuing Story, which I do not queſtion hath as much of Truth, as *Strangeneſs* in it

SECT.

SECT. II.

Martha Taylor's *Parentage, Place of Dwelling, the Time of her Birth, and her Childhood.*

1. HEr Fathers name is *William Taylor*, one who is Originally, and as to his preſent ſtate or degree, a plain Country-man, whoſe employment lyes in the Lead Mines: He hath no more eaſie way to advance a livelihood, then that which was of Divine determination, by the ſweat of his Brow: A man of no larger Politicks, then how to get an homely, honeſt maintenance for him and his; he has ſo much of Religion in him as to keep free from Lying, Looſneſs, or the Debauchery of the Age, and to have a good eſteem for holy things. The Man is of good Credit amongſt the better ſort of Neighbours. His Wife was of ſomthing an higher Rank then himſelf, both as to Birth and Education; A perſon in her common carriage very careful, and cautious about her words and actions; I am ready to ſuppoſe, in the judgement of charity, upon ſome trial of her, that ſhe hath a taſt of thoſe good things which refer to another world. This couple hath lived many years together, had ſeveral Children, and among the reſt this *Martha*, which is the occaſion of this Diſcourſe.

2. The Place of her Dwelling is *Over-Haddon*, ſo called as I conjecture from its being high,

and looking over *Haddon-hall*, from which fair House of the Earl of *Rutland*, it is about a mile distant, and as much from *Bakewell* a considerable Market-Town, in the High Peak in *Derbyshire*; The House they dwell in is but an ordinary Cottage, yet not so little but there is room enough for God to do great things in; Wonders have been brought forth in a Stable or a Manger before now; 'tis not the highness of the place that should make us turn our eyes towards it, but the greatness of the work that may be done there. But now to her that lies in it.

2. *Martha Taylor*, the talk, the wonder of that Countrey, was born about the beginning of *February* in the year 1651. Her Childhood was not guilty (that ever I heard) of any extravagant Actions; The Buds which then appear'd did not foresignifie any distastful fruits in a more blown age; Her early blossoms did not predict sourgrapes in an Autumn season. Some sober, prudent Observers have told me, *That from her first Confinement to her Couch, when growing Infirmities began to chain her to her weary Bed, that then Pious Exercises in a more considerable way began to display themselves; then rousing afflictions, the usual Prognosticks of a dying state, made her first to purpose begin to enquire after Life. This made her labour after the knowledge of the Word of God, and delight her self in turning over those Sacred Pages; where frequently she would be gathering Pearls to adorn her self and others with.*

Yet

Yet you muſt ſuppoſe it was but ſtill morning here, you may expect greater things w'en you proceed nearer the Noon of Heavens Diſpenſations with her.

SECT. III.

The Beginning and Progreſs of her Afflictions, and what they were.

1. I Am ready to ſuppoſe, that the Fountain-Head of all her Afflictious was her lameneſs, which took its beginning in the year 1661. which is now about eight years ago, by the unhappy ſtroke of a Miller her next Neighbour, over the Hips or ſmall of the Back: whether he did it in jeſt or earneſt I cannot certainly determine, but I think the latter was affirmed to me; however the occaſion was no offence given on her ſide, ſhe was ſo happy as to be harmleſs, her *Innocence* in this caſe might be a good piece of a Pillar for her to lean her ſelf upon, when wearied under that great weight of Afflictions, which was bound faſt unto her. Poor *Martha*, upon this fatal ſtroke, was taken with a lameneſs in the lower parts, indiſpoſing them for their proper uſe; which was followed at the heels with a general indiſpoſition and incompoſure of the whole inward and o tward frame; for her diſtempers did ſo croud in upon her, that ſhe was ſuddenly compell'd to lay down the whole Body

as an uſeleſs lump; to which condition ſhe hath been confined ever ſince; onely once or twice about *April* 1662. for ſome few days, ſhe made a ſhift to go abroad: But upon the beginning of *May* in the ſaid Year 1662. ſhe bid farewell to the open, refreſhing Air, and then entred cloſe Priſoner to her tedious Bed. From which place, ſince that time, ſhe hath never moved, without the help of other hands and feet beſides her own; where I ſuppoſe ſhe is like to lye till Death bring her an *Habeas-Corpus*, and make her free among the dead; in which eſtate only the weary be at reſt, and oppreſſing Diſeaſes ceaſe from troubling.

All along this tract of time, ſhe hath been troubled with other infirmities beſides lameneſs, as private bleeding, often ſick, and ſeldome free from leſs or more of a Feaver.

2. But to make a neerer approach to the time of her conſtrained Faſt; you muſt know that there were many Afflictions gathered together to bring about the thing; though ſhe had for four or five years together by times lain under various Diſtempers, yet about the cloſe of *Auguſt*, and beginning of the following Month, in the Year 1667. they combine together into a body, and add others to their number, that they might the more vigorouſly produce the ſtrange enſuing Effects. For in the entrance of *November*, in the mention'd Year, did begin her ſtrange and wonderful Bleedings at ſeveral external

ternal Parts, as at the Mouth, the Noſe, the Ear, the Eye, from which laſt part did continually diſtill perfect Tears of blood, ſo that one would have thought Life would have Wept it ſelf away out at the Eye. One very probable cauſe of this her admir'd Bleeding, might ariſe from her violent continued Vomiting, which broke open convenient Paſſages, through which the Blood might vent it ſelf; 'tis an ordinary known caſe, that the over-ſtraining of the Body does break the Veins, and ſo leſs or more produceth an Efflux of Blood from ſome or other parts. This extraordinary Vomiting continued all along *November*, ſo that ſhe neither took in meat nor drink, but preſently threw it up again, nothing could be perſwaded to abide within her *Stomack*. This ſtrong Vomiting did ariſe (as I conjecture) from thoſe *Corrupt Crudities*, Nauſeating Vapours, and Filthy Humours, begot by her long lying in Bed, and the want of convenient Exerciſe, which did weaken and vitiate the natural Attractive, Retentive, and Concoctive Faculties, and ſtir up the Stomach againſt every thing that was ſent down into it. This preternatural Vomiting did further introduce a very ſtrange Hiccough, audible many paces from the houſe, which would move her whole Body, and pluck down her Head with great torment: To which was adjoyned a ſort of *Convulſions*, or the often Diſtortion of her Joynts by the *Cramp*: *So* that now *Cramps*,

Con-

Convulſions, Strange ſighings, and the Hiccough, (all of them the Genuine Off-ſpring of a diſordered Stomack, and continued violent Vomiting) were all in open War againſt the Eaſe and Life of this poor tormented Creature. These things had made her the real wonder of all Sober, Sympathizing Spectators; to ſee a poor Fellow-creature almoſt conſtantly upon the Rack, under the moſt Exquiſite Pains, Burnings, Cramps, Vomitings, and the moſt ſtrange Bleedings and Hiccoughs, that ever I read or heard of. Now theſe all laid together, by the beginning of the enſuing *December*, had neer upon reduced the *Microcoſme* into a *Chaos*, had almoſt wholly taken Nature off the hinges, and well neer ſhattered into pieces, a poor, frail dying Body; ſo that for certain, her more Noble Immortal Part, had then bid farewel to its falling Houſe of Clay, had not Divine Providence ſtept in, and put under an everlaſting Arm.

Yet theſe Diſtempers prevail ſo far, as for a Fort-night together within *December*, they take away the uſe of Speech and Senſes, ſo that ſhe had very little to witneſs ſhe was alive, excepting ſome remaining heat and breath.

3. About the middle of this Month ſhe revives a little, gets ſomething of the exerciſe of Senſe and Speech; but ſtill hath that violent Hiccough, and frequent ſick fits: As ſhe had received neither meat nor drink for this fourteen days, ſo now being come to her ſelf ſhe finds an utter

tter loathing of, and an inability to receive neceſſary Food for the ſupport of Life: The very approach of Meat or Drink was a great trouble to her, the very ſight or ſmell of either, though at a remove, would beget her ſorrow; yea, the very thoughts of either would make her ſick before hand. She found now ſo much eaſe and ſatisfaction in the abſtaining from the uſe or thoughts of any Food, that now ſhe lays down the firſt fixed Determinations to have to do with neither come Life or Death. This makes her give her ſelf over into the Hands of an Almighty Power, and there to reſt ſatisfied, hoping and expecting to be upheld in ſome extraordinary way by immediate ſupport, or elſe to be tranſported to that place where none of theſe things were neceſſary: Seeing the ſenſible ſtreams would not run, ſhe reſolves to be contented without them, till ſhe could aſcend to the Fount in-head. No queſtion but we may expect, hope, and pray to be enabled to live without the uſe of means, when the Great Lord of the Univerſe denies the enjoyment of it. That holy Man in our Queen *Mary*'s days (of whom Mr. *Fox* ſpeaks in his *Acts and Monuments*) who through the inhumanity of his barbarous Perſecutors, was deni'd any thing at all to live upon, believes and prays, *That God would either find Meat, or take away the Stomack, and enable him to live without it*, was to a wonder anſwered in the latter of his Petitions, ſo that

that he subsisted to his Martyrdom with great delight, without the thoughts of Meat or Drink, or the sense of any need of either. As I hinted in the *Introduction*, so I say again, That Infinite Wisdome and Power hath done many stupendious Actions, without the use of means. That God which *Created* the World, without any pre-existent matter to work upon, can when it pleaseth him, support and under-prop it, or any of its Inhabitants, without borrowing the aid of any Sublunary Means, Second *Cause*, or *Creature* Help.

4. Yet, to come to my main business, I must tell you, That this poor afflicted Maid, being (as I told you) troubled with a Feavorish heat upon her, did sometimes desire a drop of Wine, or Milk, or Water, in which Prunes had been laid, or for the most part simple Water to cool her Lips withal; but then she received it with the greatest struggling, and self-counteſt that ever I saw in my life; as if so be it had been something which had come to have tormented her. The bringing neer her a little Water in a *Spoon* would make her very sick, and awaken her violent Hiccough, so that she for the most part was forced to strive long with her self before she could receive the Water to her Lips; which she made so small use of, that when the Spoon was brought away again, the most *Critical* Eye could perceive little or nothing wanting. I am perswaded, that the refreshing coolness which

the

the Senſes then made uſe of, did enjoy from the Water in the Spoon, were ſufficient ſatisfaction without letting any of it down into the Stomach, for coolneſs and refreſhing ſmells were very delightſome to her; as is abundantly evidenc'd by her living many Weeks together without touching any thing with her Lips, only ſhe had Spring-water, or Green-herbs, or Freſh-flowers, held or laid at a diſtance from her, for nigh her ſhe could not admit them, *They being* (as her ſelf would language it) *too ſtrong for her Brain.*

5. At this rate ſhe hath liv'd for about ſixteen Months together: only once in the beginning ſhe ſucked ſome ſmall quantity of a Baked Apple; and it may be, ſome very few times ſhe hath taken an inconſiderable bit of Sugar, about the bigneſs of a ſmall Peaſe; and ſince the cloſe of the laſt Year, inſtead of a ſmall drop or two of liquids, in the ſpace ſometimes of one, two, or more days, ſhe hath delighted her taſt by the ſucking of a Raiſin, Prune, or Fig, one of which will laſt her a long while together; and when when ſhe has done with it, all the Pulp is left behind: Once, I confeſs, out of curioſity, or a deſire to eat if poſſible, ſhe did ſwallow down part of a Fig, but had like to have dyed for the ſpace of twenty four hours after it, till by Vomiting ſhe threw it up again. This might be, either becauſe of the loſs of the Concoctive Faculty, and the Offenſive Humors in the Stomach,

mach, or becauſe the common Paſſages by which Nature ſhould convey ſuch things through the body are removed and diſplaced. There hath long lain behind and before, ſomething fallen out of the Body; which ſome noted Practitioners in Phyſick and Chyrurgery, ſeveral judicious Women, and at leaſt two approved, experienc'd Mid-wives, do really judge and aſſert to be the Bowels or Guts behind, and the Bladder and Matrix before. Now, 'tis no wonder that ſuch great and continued weakneſs ſhould bring down theſe, for it has often been known in the like caſe. Theſe ejected or dilapſed inward Parts, did for a long time lye by her dry and conſuming away, and put her to great unknown torments, before her modeſty would permit her to make her caſe known; which afterward was ſomething eaſed by anointing or bathing.

6. Now you may ſtand and wonder here, at the way of the preſervation of this poor Creature, how ſhe ſhould have been upheld thus long in time, under theſe multitudes of ſtrange Diſtempers, though ſhe cou'd have made ſome competent uſe of Meats and Medicines, Phyſical Cordials or Spirits; but, then that ſhe uſed none of theſe, and yet is preſerved out of the jaws of Death: *Here, here is the wonder!*

Thus I have ſhew'd you the whole of what *Martha Taylor* has had to live upon.

7. Thus alſo I have given you an account of ſeveral of her Bodily Afflictions: Many others ſup-

I ſuppoſe here were which I forgot, or never heard of; I ſhall Subjoyn one or two more, to thoſe mentioned above; as, her *Want of Sleep*, when ſhe ſlept moſt, it was but very little, and not ſound, but meer Slumber-like, the uſual time of it was in the Morning, the continuance ſeldome above an Hour or Two. But then ſhe did often live whole Weeks without any ſleep at all, and ſometimes many of theſe Weeks together; as the United Acknowledgment of ſeveral that Waked with her did ſufficiently teſtifie. Further, ſhe was often much afflicted in the weakneſs or loſs of the external *Senſes*; as, ſometimes *Seeing* was weak, ſometimes Hearing was weak; theſe two more Noble *Senſes*, which do contribute ſo much to the comfort and advantage of the Rational *Creature*, were often at a low ebb, little or nothing ſerviceable to our afflicted *Martha*: Her Smelling alſo was now and then quite gone: The Vomiting, and the ſtrong Hiccough or *Convulſions* forementioned, were beyond all controverſie the ground of this weakneſs, or deficiency of the *Senſes*, blocking up or blemiſhing their Organs or Inſtruments, and their hidden, uſeful, natural humours or qualities. Thus much with brevity for her External Afflictions.

8. I ſhall now proceed in a word or two to give you a glance at her more Inward *Sorrows*, which were much comprized under, and cauſed by two things; *Reproach* and *Temptations*. For the

the *Reproach*, it was her happineſs they deſerved that name, they might have been far greater ground of trouble if they had been juſt *Accuſations*; but yet at the firſt, ſhe was but too ready to lay theſe heavy to her heart, as you have it ſpoken of one eminently pious, *Pſal.* 69. 20. *Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heavineſs.* Who is not ſo tender of a good Name, as that the leaſt blemiſh and aſperſion caſt upon it, ſeemeth more wounding then the cutting of a Sword? *Slander* and *Calumny* looks but too inſufferable, even to good and worthy natures. *The conſtant reproach and ſcoffs of disbelievers did very often add bitterneſs to her wormwood.* Divers ſorts of Perſons there were who employed themſelves to vilifie her, and cry her up for a *Cheat*, round about the *Country*: Though the beſt Arguments they enforced their unworthy Reports with, *were only Suſpicion, Conjecture*, or *Malice*, what could they otherwiſe riſe from, ſeeing they ſpoke without tryal; they did, *Audabatarum more pugnare*, wink and fight againſt the Truth in her concern. Ignorance of the cauſe, poſſibility, or former experiences, concerning things truly admirable, is looked upon by ſome as reaſon good enough, not only to queſtion them, but alſo to deny their reality. How rational theſe were in *Martha*'s caſe, will be ſhown in third Part of this Treatiſe, to which I refer you. But as theſe were the cauſe of her inward

ward Trouble, ſo alſo were her Temptations. The Devil, the grand Tempter, who conſtantly drives a great Trade this way, took all advantages to diſturb her peace, to draw her over to his ſide, or at leaſtwiſe to draw her from her God; he ſhewed his malice in doing his utmoſt to hinder her from a way of grace; he laid what Remoras his craft could invent to ſtop her in the way to *JESUS CHRIST*. *He would either have her reſt ſatisfi'd in a State of Nature, or contented in the bare external performances of Practical Duties; or elſe, bid farewell to Religion, to all Hopes of Help from Chriſt, and future Happineſſe in Heaven; or laſtly, run her ſelf upon one of the two deſtructive Rocks of Preſumption or Diſpair.*

With this Crafty and Unwearied Adverſary *Martha* had about a year ago very ſharp Conteſts; and afterward the like with ſome of his Inſtruments, Heretical Ones, who did their utmoſt to Proſelite her to their Whimſies and Conceits. *Camden* in his *Britannia* tells us, *That the* Peak *had formerly in it noyſome and hurtful Wolves, whence he ſaith* Worme-hill *had its Name from* Wolf-haunt; *though the care and induſtry of former times hath utterly deſtroyed thoſe Brutes, yet there abide others which deſerve their Name, and are of a more*

dangerous Nature. With these *Martha*, under her great distress, was put to many a tough Dispute, and large and troublesome Discourses.

9. Her troubles of Body and Mind, were often much aggravated by her being at a remove from many necessary helps: External helps for the Body, such as should allay or mitigate the pains of the afflicted Members and Parts: Inward helps, about Soul concernments, by her solitariness, her own inquisitive thoughtfulness, about the urgent business of a dying state, and appearance in another world, her great distance from sound, serious, and pious Acquaintance. But in all these, she found some mitigation, yea, some considerable ease, by casting Anchor upon Divine goodness, and by seating down upon some or other Shelf of the Rock of Ages. Though she was in her greatest weakness, often at Ebbs and Tydes, sometimes driven out by Storms upon the blustering Waves, sometimes again shor'd upon a convenient Lee-harbour.

SECT. IV.

The frame of her Body all the time of this her being debarr'd Meat or Drink.

1. HEr Upper Parts were the most fresh and flourishing. As, her Face, excepting that it was a little fallen in about the ends of the

the Mouth, was pretty plump or fleshy, considerably free from decay, and of a ruddy or lively colour. This pure Complexion of her Face, was the admiration of all intelligent Beholders, to see a frail, brittle Body, under those great Afflictions, and that continued Abstinence from outward Supplies, look so lovely, so beautiful, not reduced to Skin and Bone, not at all gastly or terrifying, but rather a delightful Object, worth the looking on, and taking pleasure in. Thus she continued for three Quarters of a Year or more together; and for the following Month held the same quantity of Flesh, though I think not altogether so fair in the Face.

Her Armes also all along this tract of time have been well covered over.

Her Pulse pretty smooth, even, and live'y in its motions; seldom diverted out of the usual course, but when she was under some immediate sorrow of Body or Mind.

Her Eyes, though often very weak, were sometimes quick and durable in their beholding or dwelling upon objects, so that she would know that she looked upon at the first glance, and continue reading for an hour or more together.

Her Lungs commonly shew'd themselves undecay'd by the audibleness and continuation of her Discourse: She would, when freed from the troublesome Hiccough, talk pretty loud and long together.

Now do but lay theſe Conſiderations in the Ballance with her great ſorrows, and no ſuſtenance, and you will ſee they are ponderous; eſpecially if you conſider,

2. That her lower parts from top of the Ribs and downwards were a meer Skeleton, a dry Carkaſs covered over with Skin. You might have laid your Fingers betwixt the Ribs, and feel the Belly (thorow double Linnen) fallen down from the *Breſt* to the *Back*-bone, where it lay as flat, as if Nature had never enjoy'd any hollow place betwixt, or any proper Inhabitants in that Dwelling. When you had been ſatisfying your Curioſity by a ſtrict ſearch here, you would have ſuppoſed your Hand to have been examining an half-conſum'd Carkaſs within a Grave. Here alſo modeſt Inquiſition might have ſtood amazed to behold that colour and fleſh on the Face and Armes, and yet find that vaſt decay in the nether Parts.

The late ſober and ſearching Obſervation of ſome well-skill'd in Anatomy hath told us, that the *Vertebræ* or Joynts in the Back, are eaſily felt through the Belly by the touch of the Finger: And that her Body is devoid of Muſcles or fleſhy Membranes. It may have been long thus with her, but was not known before the cloſe of the laſt year, for want of ſome knowing Ones to make the Trial.

3. She

3. She hath ſince the beginning of the year 1668. avoided no Excrements by Stool or Urin; neither hath ſhe had any moiſture in her Mouth or Noſe. She did (I think) at the firſt ſometimes ſweat a little, and ſince had now and then ſome ſmall Pimples or Out-breaks upon the Wriſts of her Armes, which ſome ſuppoſe to be the reſult of thoſe few drops of weak Liquids, which might ſometimes paſſe down into her Stomack; and that the abiding Power of Nature, having no other way left, doth uſe that ſtrong one, to Evacuate her Dregs. Others, again ſay, That as long as there is any remaining blood, which is in her like water in a ſtanding Pool, it will corrupt, and that the corrupted part doth in that manner Vent it ſelf by the Pores: We all know, as to our own Bodies, that Nature, with very ſmall help, doth by theſe little inſenſible Holes in the Skin, ſend forth thoſe Vapors and Humors which would endanger the Body, if they ſhould take up their lodging within the ſame.

4. The two Senſes of Hearing and Smelling were once (that I ſay not oftner) ſo incomparably acute and quick, that ſhe would apprehend and diſtinguiſh their ſeveral Objects at a vaſt remove. A conſiderable Eccleſiaſtick Perſon, who did many times viſit her, told me, That for moſt of the time he had taken notice of her, he found ſhe had all her Faculties and ſenſes, excepting that of Seeing, in as great

vigour, as he thought it poſſible to be in an unglorified Body.

Our groſs way of feeding doth very much dull and clogg up the Senſes in their exerciſe; we little know the great comfort we ſhould enjoy in them, if we did not ſo much indulge to the irregular Appetite: Temperance or ſobriety, both as to the quantity and quality of what we live upon, would abundantly quicken and put into right motion all the *Senſes*. 'Tis undeniable, that many *Brutes*, who are compell'd to ſatisfie themſelves with a ſpare and thrifty way of feeding, do quite exceed us in *Senſe*. *But*, I ſuppoſe, if you take them in their greateſt excellency, our *Martha* did once out-vie them, and that was in Smelling; not onely that ſhe could take pleaſure in Smells, for in that its very probable Man exceeds all other Animals; but ſhe over-did them in the very thing, in which ſome ſay they ſurpaſs Man, which was the drawing nouriſhment out of Odors; for, as I told you in the preceding Section, thus ſhe lived for many Weeks together.

As concerning other things referring to the temper or frame of her *Body* under her Afflictions, you had them touched upon before.

THE

THE SECOND PART.

SECTION I.

Concerning her Parts and Piety.

THough ſhe may appear eminent in theſe, eſpecially the latter, yet the rariety of them does not lye ſo much in their greatneſs, as the way of their Attainment: She was not Cultivated by Education at home or abroad; the Country where ſhe was Born and Bred, is but too great a ſtranger to Accompliſhments of either Nature. The Inhabitants are more taken up with a ſtrict ſearch about the hidden things of Nature among the Rock and Hills, then they are about thoſe more enriching ones of Reaſon and Religion. Their Hands and Thoughts are ſo much employ'd about that dull and heavy Mineral, which is the ſtanding Traffick of thoſe Parts, that they cannot afford to wear time or pains upon the more refined or ſpiritual Ornament of Body or Mind. The very Breeding of that Country

has been noted for ſomething more then ordinary Ruſtick : The Religion of very many there is but few degrees beyond ignorance. Vulgar and pedantick conceptions look upon thoſe more noble improvements to be requiſites onely becoming them who have great eſtates and leaſure ; of this barren and low-ſpirited humour were the moſt of *Martha's* Neighbourhood, and firſt acquaintaince ; ſo that ſhe had in the beginning none to diſcipline or direct her, I mean very little Humane or Chriſtian help ; this may make what follows caſt forth brighter beams.

2. Her Parts or External Excellencies, which made her ſo taking to the Eyes and Ears of her unprejudiced Viſitors, were her Deportment, Reading, Prayer, and Diſcourſe. For,

1. Her Deportment, which was very lovely, raiſing up her head in Bed, and bowing her ſelf to all with a ſmiling grateful Countenance, continually giving ſutable terms of Reſpect and Decency. Her Courteſie, her Candour, and Comely Carriage, quite over-acted her original as to place and perſons. She was in the e things handſome without humour, and courteous without being conceited. None experienced the contrary carriage in her, but them who did openly declare themſelves ſmall Friends to her Perſon, true Religion, or her God.

2 Her Reading ; though ſhe was pretty exact in her Mothers Tongue, yet the greateſt obſervable

ſervable was the way of her attaining it, which was by her own induſtry, having but little direction beyond the bare knowledge of the Alphabet. She did of her ſelf purſue Letters into Words, Words into Sentences, and Sentences into her own Heart, if they were but ſpiritual. A deſire of informing her ſelf with her own Eyes out of the *Book* of Life, was the firſt motive to lay out her afflicted hours upon the learning to Read; which having fully and happily obtained, ſhe laid out upon the holy *Bible*, or ſome, or other choſen *Books*: And here now ſhe beſtow'd all her *Breathing* Seaſons, all the Spare Minutes, which the Abſence from Company, violent Pains of *Body*, or the Weakneſs of the Eyes would befriend her with.

3. For Prayer; She was obſerved to be conſtant in it, either in *Confeſſing* Sin, *Begging* Mercy, or Praiſing God. She ſeemed to be made up of Prayer when moſt afflicted. The neer approach of the *By*-ſtanders Ear might be ſatisfi'd in this, That her Voice, when at the weakeſt, would be ſpending it ſelf upon her God, by fervent, pious Ejaculations, to hold up an heart-cheering Intercourſe between *Heaven* and her hungering Soul. For an affectionate Joyner in this great Duty, when I Viſited her, I muſt confeſs, I never found her Parallel: She ſeemed by a ſenſible, ſerious, ſtrugg'ing, melting frame of Spirit, to go (as it were) out of her

her ſelf into an upper Region; ſo that when a rouſing Prayer hath been ended, ſhe would be puzzled to reduce her ſelf, and compoſe the humane frame. *Her* own perſonal way of praying, which was much concealed, and to her ſelf, was uſually ſhort and ſententions, but very ſignificant, comprehenſive, humble, and powerful.

4. *Her* Diſcourſe; which, if you conſider the Style of it, and compare it with the common Dialect of that *Country*, you will find it did for the moſt part very much excel. The *Peak Country* has a very courſe Language, very thick and home-ſpun; but hers was of a finer, unaffected make; uſually pretty fluent and oratorical, but never dull and ſordid. Some took much notice of this, as a thing rather ſtrange then contemptible; no queſtion, but 'tis a very lawful Art to advantage good diſcourſe, and pious conference, with powerful taking Language. 'Tis, if I may ſo call it, a ſacred Fraud, every way lawful to ſteal the Ears and *Hearts* of thoſe with whom we converſe to the conſiderate obſervation of the deep concernments of an Eternal and better *State*. The Sword of Rhetorick in a Wiſe Mans hand may wound the *Champions* of Irreligion, and win the Day for Heaven. The applauded wit of the Age, in which we live, doth but too much proſtitute it ſelf to the greateſt Ribaldry. Our *Martha* had the happineſs, to enjoy a conſiderable, clear,

clear, ſmooth Phraſe, not guilty of bombaſt or boyiſh vanity; which for the moſt part ſhe beſtow'd upon the beſt of things. I confeſs her ignorance of other Tongues then what ſhe was born to, did ſometimes in the beginning Months of her afflictions produce ſome ſmall miſtakes of Words and Terms, which afterwards were poliſhed to a more acute and regular way of ſpeaking.

5. But the manner of her *Speech* was not worth the taking notice of, if you compare it with the matter of the ſame.

Her ordinary ſayings were very conſiderable; with which I queſtion not but I by my own, or friends *Collections*, might have Stuft more Sheets, then at this time I muſt have leave to Beſtow upon Her Story. Moſt of theſe were *Scripture* Dialects and of them I ſhall give you no account: I know others who have writ upon Young Maids, under ſome ſuch like Viſitations, have beſtow'd twenty, forty, or more Pages, upon the meer repetition of *Scripture* Paſſages: Theſe I do not, I dare not reflect upon, though I ſhall not imitate.

It was the good Aſſertion of one of her Judicious Viſitors, *That he never heard her ſpeak any thing untheological; and that, though ſhe pretended to nothing of Inſpiration, nor any thing extraordinary, but what was the Effect of her Reading and Diligence; yet whatſoever Diſcourſe did occur*

course, he never found her lost in it, but that she was clearly with good Language, and to purpose able to talk of it.

The ordinary Subjects of her Discourse were upon the Blacks and Whites, the Storms and Sun-shine of the Christians Life.

She thought no time lost in which she could but say something against sin, and for Holiness; in which she could but cry up the Promises to lost returning sinners, and the Advantages of Affliction to them that belong to God; in which she could but sufficiently dilate upon the miseries of a besotted World, and the glorious enjoyments of the *New Jerusalem.*

SECT. II.

BUt I shall here give you a Copy of some of her ordinary sayings, as they were not much above a Month ago taken from her own Mouth, by the Hand of a Friend: They were short Answers to Questions proposed, but I shall take no notice of the Questions.

I blesse my God he hath wrought in me a desire to exercise my self in all wayes and duties of Holinesse, so as he may receive glory, others edification, and I comfort in the Day of Jesus.

I de-

I desire, I resolve for sincerity: I know that it's God that works all in me and for me; of my self, as to pious actions, I can do just nothing; it's He, He, that is become all to me, and I am nothing but what I am in him; my motion, my being, is in Him, and of Him.

The Reproaches of the World, which are many, and crowd in upon me, do not, cannot rob me of my Joy which I have in Christ Jesus, my Lord, my Portion, my Righteousness, my Life, my All.

I in Christ, or rather in me, doth oppose Sin, Errour, Deceit, yea, all manner of uncleanesse both of Flesh and Spirit: and it is He that giveth me the Victory over all Enemies Visible and Invisible. So that to him belongs all the Praise, and he shall have it: I disclaim any share in it, let him have all. I know by Nature wrath was my Portion, and that I was born in open Rebellion to God: Now if Christ through his unspeakable goodnesse and sorrow did redeem me to himself, I am sure I ought to be zealous of good works, and to glorifie Him with my Soul and Body which are his.

If I was able to feed upon all the good Creatures of God, where as now I cannot, yet they could none of them satisfie or solace my poor, weak, hungry Soul: It is the enjoyment of him, who is the Bread of Life, the Life of my Life, that is, my satisfaction, to whom be glory.

2. *Sin*

2. *Sin is the Serpents fruit, and ſo it come to be of that Poiſonous Nature, that it infects the World, ſets God and Men at difference, wounds the ſoul, and begets the ſting of Death.*

Holineſs, as I ſhall ſpeak of it, is a Believers ſerious Converſation which he lives in Chriſt, by which he is doing what he can to re-gain the Image of God he loſt in Paradiſe, and to get himſelf ready for an happy-eſtate in Heaven, where all Holineſs dwells.

Afflictions are the actings of Gods dear love towards Believers, for whom the Lord loveth he afflicteth. Afflictions are thoſe ſtrange ſeeds, which while they are taking root in the Believers heart do beget war, weeping, and ſorrow, but yet at length they do bring forth the profitable, the pleaſant, and peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs.

The promiſes, which are many, great, and precious, are the rich manifeſtations and aſſurances of Divine goodneſs; by which God deſigns to encourage the poor Believer, and bear up his heart under all his ſorrows. The Reconciliation of the Promiſes and Providences of God, ſeems to be one of the greateſt myſteries, and ſweeteſt ſtudies in the world: To ſee how ſweetly theſe joyn themſelves together at the journies end, though they ſeem to thwart one the other all the way.

The Word of God, I mean the Word of Reconciliation, is (as it were) God ſpeaking forth himſelf to us in Jeſus Chriſt. It is the rule and Guide to Holineſs, to God, and Happineſs.

To

To ſpeak of Heaven is a very great difficulty, for 'tis an unſpeakable Kingdom of Glory; eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of thoſe things which God hath there prepared for them that love him. How ſhould I then tell what Heaven is, any further then thus, That there is fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for evermore; and that which makes all theſe excellent, is that they are everlaſting.

Death is no evil Meſſenger to the Saint, for the Sting is taken away, and he gains by dying: Chriſt hath been the death of Death, and ſo Death is no death to the Saint: It is but, as it were his diſſolver out of Fleſh into Spirit, ſo that when Death comes the Saint may tryumph, and bid it welcome.

What I ſaid of Heaven, I may ſpeak juſt backward concerning Hell. The torments are unutterable, and for their extremity expreſs'd by weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth, theſe alſo are the more terrible becauſe everlaſting.

As I am crucified to the world, and the world to me; and as I know the Devil is my Adverſary, and God a preſent Help in time of trouble; ſo I look upon all the ſcandals that are caſt upon me to be as Pearls in my Crown.

I look upon my preſervation without the uſe of creatures to be the manifeſtation of Infinite Power, for the benefit and advantage of them that fear God, to let them ſee how God can preſerve life by

and

and of himself, and for the hardening of the obstinate and impenitent; for my own awakening, and bringing into a way of holiness,

3. Thus I have given you a taste of her sayings, out of the Paper above mentioned; which I have compendiz'd and put something into another order, inserting also some few short Sentences which I heard my self, or were communicated to me by worthy friends; doing what I could to keep to her very words. But I can assure you, that much of what she used to discourse was little inferiour to these, for she is well versed in the Scripture, and of a quick apprehension.

SECT. III.

I Suppose its now time to shew you something of her Piety or Person.

1. Of these you may have gathered somthing by what went before. They were introduc'd by a great work upon her Spirit: For you must know, that all *November*, and in the beginning of *December* in the year 1667. she were exceedingly puzled to know what would become of her to all Eternity, having Sin and Death before her, she was put to her utmost shifts to obtain a Christ. There are many indeed that think meer Morality may land them in Heaven without a work of Grace, which we usually call

call Regeneration; upon which conceit (its very probable) that notable Ruler of the *Jews*, mentioned *John* 3. 1. had built a very high Fabrick of Hope; he comes in a ſecret manner to own Chriſt as a Teacher come from God becauſe of his Miracles, *verſ.* 2. but Chriſt takes little or no notice of what he ſays, but does upon the matter tell him all this will not ſerve thy turn, though thou be a Phariſee, one of the ſtricteſt Sect, yet thou muſt either be born again, or elſe thou cannot ſee the Kingdom of God, *verſ.* 3. *Nicodemus* was here at a very great ſtand, he could not tell what to make of the words of Chriſt, *verſ.* 4. But Chriſt affirms the ſame again with as great vehemency, and rather greater fulneſs, with the reaſon of what he ſays, *verſes* 5, 6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh*, and will be fleſh and corrupt, notwithſtanding external Profeſſion; nay, the outward waſhing of Baptiſm will not ſerve the turn alone without the Laver of Regeneration, not Works of Righteouſneſs, which we have done, will do the buſineſs for us, but there muſt be *the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. 3. 5. *There muſt be a tranſformation by the renewing of the mind*, Rom. 12. 2. *This being born of the Holy Ghoſt, or being Baptized with it and fire*, as *Mat.* 3. 11. This being bathed and burnt, till the filth and droſs of Nature was done away, was the grant difficulty with our afflicted *Martha*. She told

me, *That upon this account she was once in great darkness, and under sad distress; to allude to that of* Paul, *Rom. 7. 9. Being without the Law she thought her self alive, in a condition good enough to carry her to Heaven; but when the Commandement came, when she understood her own undone condition by the Word of God; then sin revived, then she found it rouse up it self and discover life and strength, and then she died, she found her self dead under trespasses and sins: This kept her for a season upon the Waves, under Storms and Winds* (as I said before) *without sight of Sun or* Star, *but* (as she told me) *it was her happiness that before she was split upon the Rock of Despair, the Sun of Righteousness broke forth from behind the Clouds, with healing under his wings.* She was often put to cry out, *Phosphore redde diem:* But the glorious Day-star appearing, brought in hope and hearts-ease with it: So *that* (upon her own Confession) *she has enjoy'd much comfort, calm, and Halcyon dayes ever since.*

2. Now I have shew'd you a little of the beginning Work; here was the Foundation, as laid upon the great, elect, and precious Corner Stone. But to proceed, I shall a little shew you the Superstructure in some few things, as her Knowledge, Gratitude, Patience, Hope, Zeal, Love, and Perseverance.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

1. HEr Knowledge; She was very large in this comprehending skill in all the most neces-ſary Truths and Duties, notably read in the Bible, and ſeveral other good Books. She enjoy'd but a ſhort while to labour in, but had done abundance of work. She was able to diſcourſe in all the ordinary known things within the Sphere of Religion. The ſtrangneſs of this appear'd in her ſmall helps at the firſt, all were ignorant about her, no knowing Heads to conferr with, and then ſhe was far from the Church, and the ordinary uſe of means; but of theſe ſomething hath been ſaid. Her Knowledge was not only Speculative and Notional, it was not Aiery, and only dwelling in the Head, but Practical and Experimental. She had the happineſs not only to know, but alſo to taſt the Truth of the Goſpel: She did not only know there was a God, but ſhe taſted and ſaw how good this God was. This was a means to lead her up to God and Chriſt, to fill her heart with thoughts of them, and to breed ſtrong and warm affections toward them. Her Knowledge did diſcover it ſelf to be a gracious Illumination, by its ſoundneſs, humility, and ſelf-applications; it did not only know God, but was ready to glorifie him as God, it ſhew'd it ſelf to be a good underſtanding in that it did the commandements of God. The

ſtrength of her Knowledge was made apparent by her diſcovering the Sophiſmes, and detecting the ſtrange whimſies and wild practices of various Opinioniſts, who did every day aſſault her.

2. Her Gratitude did ſtream forth both to God and Men: To Men, in being exceeding thankful for the leaſt Courtiſie imaginable, an humble rational proof ſhould have been received with chearful thanks: I ſaw her once weep that ſhe was not able to make any requital to thoſe her Friends, who ow'd then came to viſit her out of pure Love, and for Pious ends. It alſo appeared in her conſtant importuning Heaven for Remuneration to be given into the Boſome of them, who did her but the meaneſt good turn. Her thankfulneſs to God was much of her buſineſs, ſhe was not only happily emp'oy'd in returning Praiſe to the Great Provider for thoſe things which all ſerious Hearts wou'd have made Arguments of Gratitude, but alſo (which was the wonder) ſhe was uſually thankful for the greateſt afflictions which lay upon her. She form'd that before afflicted ſhe went aſtray; and that miſeries of Body made her enquire the more induſtriouſly for the good old way, the way of eaſe and happineſs.

She would bleſs God for every thing; like good and holy *Bradford* the Martyr, in his Reply to *Creſwel*, ſaith he, *If the Queen will give me Life, I will thank her; if ſhe will Baniſh me,*

will thank her: If she will burn me, I will thank her: If she will condemn me to perpetual Imprisonment, I will thank her. I never saw, nor heard, that *Martha*, under her greatest sorrow, did the least repine at the hand of God, but was ready always to vent her Groans with this Language, *Blessed be God.* She continually having a fixed eye upon the great undeserved mercy of God, would not so much as send forth one Sigh without improving that breath to the praise of God. Thus *Servulus* a primitive Saint, lying a long time under grievous afflictions, in such a condition as one could scarcely make a distinction between Life and Death, would often and ordinarily be breathing forth, *God be thanked.* The poor persecuted Members of Christ have been formerly known by *the Name of, The praising People.*

3. Her Patience was so eminent when she was most exercised under sorrows, that one of her constant impartial Visitors, told me, *That in her afflictions she had exercised as much patience as ever he read or heard of, excepting Christ himself.* She would ordinarily witness her patience by her lying still and quiet under her greatest troubles: She would with a very composed countenance bear up head and heart under sickness and pains of body, and scoffes and reproaches upon her Name and Innocency; never complaining of the greatness or continuance of these. It is the glory of Patience to be silent and submissive

under the greateſt laſhes of Providence, to re-
ceive the Rod with a ſmiling Face, to bear it
own burden chearfully without inordinate ſor-
row, or fretting diſcontent.

The truly patient Soul labours more to im-
prove, then remove the Croſs.

This can (as it were) ſtand ſtill upon the
floting Waves, contemplating the All-ſeeing
Eyes of Heaven. It can with *Paul* and *Sila*
ſing in the Stocks, and exalt and triumph
though the Enemies gets the day. Thus the
Followers of Jeſus in the firſt days of the Go-
ſpel did take chearfully the ſpoiling of their
goods, they went away rejoycing that they
were counted Worthy to ſuffer Affliction; they
did joy, nay, they did glory in tribulation.

I will not ſay, but *Martha* might be a little
ſtartled when affliction did at firſt make the on-
ſet, but ſhe would preſently re-aſſume her forces,
and ſtand out againſt the ſhock, or combined
ſtrength of oppoſition. Patience is well-skill'd
in Chymiſtry, it can draw meat out of the eater,
and fetch ſweet out of the ſtrong; it can ex-
ſtract matter of ſerving and praiſing God out
of the greateſt pænal evils that can fall upon it,
while on this ſide the bounds of Eternity. One
once asking *Martha*, *Why ſhe bleſſed God for the
evil of ſorrow*, ſhe replyed to this purpoſe, *That
ſhe taſted Honey at the end of the Rod.*

4. Her Hope, or if you will Faith, for I ſhall
unite theſe together; they being pretty neer
akin,

akin, or at the leaſt neer Neighbours, uſually living under one roof, and drawing breath together. She had an advantageous Art of caſting Anchor upward, and of Hawking Expectation within the Vail; ſhe would live very well upon a Promiſe; this was the ground of her ſtocking up ſuch precious Treaſures; yea, ſhe would make a good ſhift to live upon things not ſeen. Becauſe there was no uſe of theſe rare Graces in another world, therefore, I ſuppoſe, ſhe determined to make her utmoſt advantage of them while ſhe was in this. By theſe ſhe ſtay'd and ſupported her Soul upon the chief Corner-ſtone, under the greateſt ſorrows, difficulties, improbabilities, and contradictions of Senſe and carnal Reaſon: She looked upon the engaged Power and Truth of an ever gracious God, to be ſufficient for her to content her ſelf, and bear up her heart withal. This was the ground of her ſolemn Reſignation and ſound Dependance; this made her give her All to God, and expect and look for All from God. She did not only roll her ſelf on God, but acquieſs and reſt ſatisfied in him alone: She ſaw the barrenneſs, nay, the baſeneſs, and univerſal emptineſs of Self and the Creature, and this made her go beyond both to Chriſt, as one willing to cloſe in with and ſtick to him upon any terms. She looked upon a Chriſt obtained by the greateſt loſſes to be the greateſt gain; this made her think her ſhipwrack very happy,

becauſe by it ſhe was unexpectedly thrown upon the ſhoars of Eternity: She was ready to think and ſay, *That if ſhe had not periſhed and been miſerable ſhe ſhould never have been ſaved or happy.* She ſo employ'd theſe two noble uſeful Graces, that ſhe alwayes lived either by Evidence, or by Recumbence. She was often obſerved to make very fair for Aſſurance, though ſhe delighted to language all her Diſcourſe in this affair by thoſe humble, ſweet, and commendable words, *Good Hope.*

5. Her Zeal was notably diſplay'd in the warmth and fervour of her Love and Language for God and the Goſpel: She would not hear the Holy Name of the one abuſed, but ſhe would throw forth ſome prudent Reproof or *Remora* into the way of the Prophane: She would not hear the Duties or Dignities of the other ſet light by, or ſcoff'd at, but ſhe would with humble boldneſs attempt their vindication. Pious zeal, not only puts a luſtre upon, but life into all the Affections of the Soul; its that which makes us run and not be weary, and walk and not faint; it makes us in a manner fly about the buſineſs of God. Where this is prudent, knowing, and ſanctifi'd, it puts valour into the heart of the Chriſtian, and makes him do all that ever he can, keeping his proper ſphere againſt Sin, and for a life of Holineſs. When our Affections grow dull and heavy, its good to put life into them again, by fetching this Coal from the Alter,

not

not from the common Hearth. The warmeſt Region is not too hot for the well-adviſed, ſober Saint, yet indiſcreet Zeal, which is the *Torrid Zone*, proves too hot for him to dwell in.

6. Her Love was once ſo happy as to embrace every thing that came from God; by this Affection ſhe would run and purſue after the deſirables of another world. Her ſoul ſeemed to act freely and ſuperlatively in this: It was her judgment, *That the beſt way to Love God in a due meaſure, was to love him out of meaſure.* Some have obſerved her weep and ſigh for love to God. Its the good ſaying of an eminent Perſon of this Nation, ſpeaking concerning *Seraphick* Love, *That he alone loves God as much as he ought, that loving him as much as he can, ſtrives to repair the deplored imperfection of that Love, with an extream regret to find it no greater.* Once a pious *Suffolk* Miniſter, weeping as he ſat at Table, and being aſked the reaſon of it, he anſwered, *Becauſe he could love Chriſt no more.* True Evangelick Love knows no doubts, no dangers, no difficulties; this having God for its only object, can do as *Jacob* did, *Endure the ſcorching heat by day, and the moſt bitter pinching cold by night:* The words of the Spouſe in that laſt of the *Song of Solomon*, are ſurpaſſing to this purpoſe, *Set me as a ſeal upon thine heart, as a ſeal upon thine arme, for Love is as ſtrong as death, jealouſie*

jealouſie [or ardent burning love] *is as cruel as the Grave; the Coals thereof are Coals of Fire, which have a moſt vehement Flame. Many Waters cannot quench Love, neither can the Floods drown it; if a man would give all the ſubſtance of his Houſe for Love it would be utterly contemned.*

7. Her Perſeverance did conſiſt in her abiding Patient under ſorrows; her continuing firm in the Faith, notwithſtanding reproaches and frequent temptations to the contrary. Its an humane thing to err, but an helliſh one to perſevere in error. Its very good to enter into Heavens way, but a thouſand times better to go to the far end of it. Perſeverance ſets the Crown upon the Head of all the Vertues and Graces, which the Believer is the owner of. Theſe conſiderations taught *Martha* how to diſtinguiſh between Sin and Duty, what was Ornament and what diſgrace.

Thus I have given you a brief Account of ſome of this Maids Inward Excellencies, as they diſcovered themſelves in her Actions: You may call them by what Names you pleaſe, onely I am ſure they do very much adorn the true Believer, and may fitly enough be called the Vertues or Graces of the truly Rational and Reformed Soul.

You muſt do me the favour to take this as an account of her Actings or Behaviour only in the

the year 1668. which was her more afflicted season. I suppose she did never to purpose know what God or Sin was before. Few there are that do sufficiently discern the way to Heaven, till they come to Weeping-cross. Afflictions are like the Fullers Teasles, which are very sharp and scratching in themselves, yet serve to make the Cloth pure and fine. The most excellent Water-springs are hottest in the coldest Winter-season. The more the Camomil is trodden with the Feet, the more it spreads and grows. It has been an old observation, that some Vertues and Graces are like Starrs that shine not in the day of Prosperity, but shine only in the night of Adversity: 'Tis probable we had never known *Jobs* eminent Patience, had we not known his extraordinary Afflictions. There is a very odoriferous water in the Dumask-rose, but not to be obtained till extracted by fire. We may allude to *Job* 22. 29. When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, there is lifting up. When an Holy Man was asked which were the most pleasant and comfortable days that ever he enjoy'd, he answered, *His Mourning days*, these were his most joyful days, and therefore he cryed out, *O give me my Mourning Days, give me my Mourning Days, for they were the days of my greatest joy.*

Thus I know it was with *Martha Taylor*, she was most eminent when most under sorrow: If at any time she was guilty of humane failings,

or

or did incline an ear to the charms of the Flesh or Seducers, it was when most at ease, and freed from afflictions.

But for the year above named she seemed very famous in the foregoing Particulars: and was not dull or drowsie, but very lively in their exercise.

There was one thing then appeared in her which is (for any thing I know) highly commendable, and that was, That she discover'd a large love to Religion, only upon its own account, or upon the account of the ever-glorious God, to whom Religion tends: She seemed to be very much uninterested, not to close in with it upon the account of breeding, party, opinion, conceit, or the like; but because of the great loveliness, and spiritual advantage which she saw in it. 'Tis beyond all question that some take up a strict way of Religion, that they may be looked upon as singular: But for this, you may take that of the ingenious and illustrious Author of Wisdom, *Trivos*, p. 199. *An affected singularity* (saith he) *and that in trifles, is but the adultery and pedantry of Morality:* But if the thing be serious, and the singularity without affectation, 'tis so far from being a just shame, that it is indeed the true gallantry of vertue, that dares enjoy and own its single self, and stand fast, amidst the stream of the worlds headiest current.

PART

PART III.

The Probability or Possibility in point of Nature, and in her Concern.

SECTION I.

1. I Find this commonly asserted among the most famous Transmarine Physitians, though I confess many of our most noted Home-bred ones, with whom I have conversed, have been ready at the first hearing to decry it as an impossibility. The thing does indeed very strangely thwart ordinary Experience, and vastly go against the grain of our common way of living. Which, I suppose, was the ground of *Hippocrates* conjecture, *That it was impossible to live beyond the seventh Fasting-day*, in *lib. ejus* περὶ ἀέρων *Pliny* indeed goes something further, but does not ascend so high as to twice the number of days, *lib.* 11. *cap.* 24. This also was the ground of *Harvets* vigorous opposition against the Learned *Joubert*, who writ the Story of one of these foodless Creatures.

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2. The thing has appeared ſo far impoſſible, that it hath made ſome, who could not deny its reality as to matter of fact, run to refuge their Apprehenſions in a Miracle, and think they vindicate themſelves ſufficiently in the three famous inſtances we meet withal in the Sacred Hiſtory, concerning *Moſes*, *Elijah*, and the ever Bleſſed Jeſus.

3. Others fly to the Aid of Angels, as if theſe good Spirits did in ſome hidden way ſuſtain the humane frame by ſome unthought-at inward or outward Applications. But I think *Sennertus* reaſons to the contrary are powerful enough to ſtop the mouth of theſe; He ſaith, *The moſt of thoſe that thus lived without the uſe of Meat or Drink, were Perſons little or nothing acquainted with Religion, and ſome of them no better then Heathens. And it cannot be imagined that the All-glorious God ſhould work a Miracle without a Cauſe, and that upon (or by) ſuch in whom was found nothing ſingular or excellent, and for no propoſed end.* I never heard of any thing mentioned by theſe Prodigious, Abſtemi-nous Ones, concerning Doctrine, Diſcipline, or Providence; nor any thing referring to the Introduction, Illuſtration, Emendation, or Exaltation of theſe. I am ſure many eminent Proteſtant Writers, both at home and abroad, do upon good grounds affirm that Miracles (as we underſtand them here in the ſtricter ſence) are altogether ceaſed. 'Tis ſomething to the thing

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in hand, if we consider, That those ever worthy Persons mentioned in the *Scripture*, were under no decays of body, notwithstanding their miraculous fasting; and that they were voluntary in it, whereas those of latter Ages were alwayes constrained to this abstinence by some disease, tedious distempers, or defects of nature.

4. But further, some have been ready to give up the day to the Devil, as if he either did move and act the body and its members, when the rational soul was stepped forth into another habitation; or else, that he did, in a clanculous and insensible manner, convey necessary food into the body, and in as strange a way carry the excrements out of the same: This cunning trick of the Devil may have been not only possible, but experienc'd; but yet it is altogether unlikely in the case of several of those who have been thus preserved, because some of them have returned again to eating and drinking, and others of them have married and brought forth children; and that which shew'd they were not possest by any evil spirits, was the piety of some of them, their frequency in Prayers, Reading the *Scriptures*, and other Exercises of Devotion and Holiness, as may be seen in the Printed Relations concerning them.

But of these you may see several more in the forenamed eminent *Sennertus*, *Medicinæ Pract. lib. 3. par. 1. sect. 2. chap. 2.*

SECT.

SECT. II.

I Shall now give you ſome few Conſiderations, which may make the thing probable: As,

1. The Teſtimonials of ſome Learned Men, Men of Note and Credit. That pious Father of the Church *St. Auguſtin*, in an Epiſtle of his to *Caſulanus de jejunio*, tells of one, *Who in his time lived very many days without either meat or drink*; in which relation he gives you a Teſtimonial of *the probability of vaſt Abſtinence*. *J. Jonſton* of *Poland*, in his *Thaumatographia Naturalis*, ſpeaking *De Inedia ſtupendis*, ſaith to this purpoſe, *Although the uſe of Nutriment be neceſſary for the preſerving life, yet there have been very many found, who, notwithſtanding the want of the ſame, have been kept alive*. *Zaculus Lucitanus* in his Hiſtory of the chiefeſt Phyſitians, *lib. 6. Hiſt. 2.* ſaith, *That Authors, not at all to be undervalu'd, do tell us, that ſeveral have lived a very long while without meat and drink*: And there he gives you his own aſſent to the thing, with a Catalogue of twelve noted Authors, and their Works, in which you may find the Perſons Names, the Places where they lived, and the continuance of their Abſtinence. *Beverlink* alſo in his *Theatrum Tom. 1. de Abſtinen. & de cibo*, gives you in an equal number of differing foregoing Authors affirming the ſame thing. But

I ſhall

I shall close up this with the Testimony of our Doctor *M. Causabon*, in a late Treatise of his concerning Credulity and Incredulity, p. 49. where he saith; *I will say upon the credit of so many good Authors, and the particular relations of so many examples, delivered with so many circumstances, wherein no mistake or imposture can rationally be suspected, that I do believe it, that divers men, and more women have lived several years, some to their lives end, without any bodily food ordinary or extraordinary, liquid or solid; yea, I believe it, as I believe that I my self, with ordinary food and Gods blessing, have lived hitherto.*

2. This may further appear probable, if you consider that there are several inferiour Animals, which live many Months together without feeding upon any thing at all. They do, I confess, live a strange, inert, drousie, dead kind of life; but yet live they do, and that as really as when they are more lively and active: Its as certain there is fire in the sparke, or in the unextinct embers, as in the burning flame.

All the great searchers into the misteries of the Creation, have given us many wonderful examples of this nature. The two great Beginners were *Aristotle* and *Pliny*, upon the account cry'd up by after Ages; The *Natural History* of the one, and the *History of Animals* writ by the other, hath given you many true Relations referring this way, of which I shall give you some few hints.

The Bat and Swallow (both of them well known to us) do upon the firſt approach of Winters bitter blaſts, take their leave of the open Air, and betake themſelves to Caves, Clifts of Rocks, or Hollow-trees, where they lye hid for five or ſix Months together, without the reception of any created thing to live upon.

Some Creatures, which ſeem contemptible to us, are worth the taking notice of upon this account, of which ſort there is the Snail, the Fly, the Frog, and the Snake, or Adder, with many others; all which lye hid all along the Winter Months, in ſome ſecret holes or crannies, where they have no external thing to live upon; but do, as many Philoſophick Wits have ſtrongly conjectur'd, ſubſiſt by the aid of ſome unctious matter or humour which is lodg'd within themſelves.

Some alſo ſay upon their own experience, that Bears and other furred Brutes, in the Northern frozen Parts of the world, do for certain live after the ſame manner, from the middle of *September* to the middle of *April*.

Many Pious and Learned Men have wondered at the meaneſt Creatures, to ſee their ſtrange Natures, and way of living. *Auſtine* could beſtow ſerious thoughts upon the ſilly Fly, and for its life (though, as *Voſſius* ſaith, not for its uſe or end) preferr'd it to the glorious Sun in the Firmament. The great *Zanchy* in his learned *Tractate de operibus Dei*, ſits down, and wonders

at, and contemplates the glorious Creator and Preſerver of the World, even in his meaneſt Creatures.

3. Another thing that ſhews the probability and reality of the ſometimes foodleſs ſubſiſtence of the Rational Humane Creature, is, the frequent Trials that have been made by careful Magiſtrates and skillful Phyſitians, ſuch as did their utmoſt not to be deceived: This I ſhall exemplifie in two or three famous ſtories.

The firſt is that writ, experienc'd, and vindicated by *Franciſcus Citeſius*, whoſe eminency advanced him to be Phyſitian to *Lewis* the thirteenth King of *France*, and to Cardinal *De Richelieu*; he tells the Story at large in his *Abſtinens Conſolentanea*, *Concerning a Maid whoſe name was* Joanna Balam, *her Father and Mother were but mean ruſtick people* (which I acquaint you with to ſhew you how much ſhe was parallel to *Martha Taylor*) *ſhe begun in* March 1599. *and was firſt taken with a continued Feaver, and then fell to ſore Vomiting for twenty days together, and after that was made Speechleſs for a like number of days, after which ſhe did utterly refuſe all ſort of Meat and Drink, her Belly alſo fell down to her Back, the* Muſculi Inteſtina, *and* Viſcera, *did all appear contracted and dry'd up; from the Ribs to the Thighs ſhe was nothing but skin and bone, and yet her Breaſts were full, her Armes and Thighs pretty well fleſhed, her Face round, and her Lips ſomewhat red, ſhe avoided*

no Excrements from any part, and thus she lived from twelve, till she was fourteen years of age. To this Relation the learned Magistrate *D. N. Rapinus*, bears a sufficient witness by his ingenious Verses, which runs before this Relation of *Citesius*, some few of which are,

——— *Ecce duos jam Virgo per annos,*
Vitam agitat; nullo freta vel usa cibo.
Observata Magistratu, & vicinia ab omni,
Qua fluit exiguo juncta Vigenna Goro.
Jam jejuna famem tolerat sine fraude biennem
Et jam præclusis faucibus arcta gula est.
Mireris nullum suspenso a pectore ventrem:
Mireris nullas inde, vel inde vices, &c.

The next I shall give you is of a *German* Girl, whose Father was a plain and Country-tradesman. *She lived about seven years without Meat or Drink, the strange report of her total abstinence rous'd up the noted Prince* John Casimire, *then* Count Palatine, *to do his utmost to try the truth in her case, which he did twice over, first in* November 1584. *sending two knowing Physitians to try her, who give in their account, that the thing was real: She continuing on to live without food for some years more, he sends again two other deep-sighted Physicians to try her the second time, which they did by the utmost scrutiny, in* April 1588. One of the first of these Doctors of Physick, *viz. Henricus Smelius* in the tenth

tenth Book of his *Miſcellanies*, gives you this Relation, with ſome other ſtrange paſſages concerning her.

I might alſo have told you of that other Maid of *Spire* in *Germany*, whoſe memory *Joubert* hath made illuſtrious, and *Langius* mentions in his Epiſtles *to have lived four years without meat, try'd by* Ferdinand *the Emperour, and other Magiſtrates in that Country.* But the laſt I ſhall name, is that famous known ſtory of *Apollonia Scheieriana* (or *Chrier*, as I think *Quercitanus* calls her) *Who was born in the Town of* Gats, *within the juriſdiction of the celebrated City* Berne *in* Switzerland; *She firſt loſt the Appetite to Meats, then to Drinks, and ſhortly after fell under an abhorrence of all Nutritives: Her fame flying abroad in the Senate of* Berne, *preſently gives forth a ſtrict Order, which brought her and her mother into an Hoſpital within their City, where ſhe was committed to the through ſearch and obſervation of many watchful Eyes; who all, after a competent time of trial, give in their Teſtimony to the Senate, that ſhe did beyond diſpute live without any Aliment at all. And thus from the year* 1600. *for ſeveral years on forward, ſhe continued this her marvelous faſt; all which time the whole* Abdomen, *or the Belly from the Ribs to the* Pudendum Muliebre, *was fallen down and hard, which was frequently view'd by her multitudinous Viſitors.* But you may find her whole Hiſtory writ by the care and induſtry of the Learned

Paulus Lentulus (who was then Profeſſor of Phyſick at *Berne*) with a Collection of ſeveral other Remarkables of the like Nature; as alſo the united Teſtimonies and Eulogies of ſeveral of them, who were his Eminent, Noble, Contemporaries.

I ſuppoſe theſe things makes a total Abſtinence, appear ſomething more probable and real, then many have been free to conjecture.

I confeſſe, many things of this nature may have been fabulous in all likelihood: As, the *Aſtom*, a People in *India*, who are without Mouths, and live onely by *Odors* and *Aire*; the *Lucomorians*, who Inhabit the *Northern* Mountains, in the moſt Remote Parts of *Muſcovy*, neer to the *Frozen Sea*, where the ſtern *Boreas* keeps his Bluſtring Court, and hath his Imperial Throne Seated; There this People towards the cloſe of *November* every year, are glad to betake themſelves to Dens and Caves, where they lye Frozen up till the grateful influence of the Vernal Sun awake them out of this cold Sleep; of theſe ſee *Citeſius* in his *Abſtin. Confol.* p. 57, 103. &c. and *Guvagninus* in *Moſcoviæ Deſcript. de Lucomor.* We have alſo great variety of ſtories of Eremitical Men, Superſtitious Zealots, and Popiſh Votaries, who are reported to have baniſhed themſelves from humane Society, into ſome or other ſolitary Places or Deſarts, and there to have lived without Meat or Drink for many Months or Years; as is to be found

found in *Sennertus*, the above-nam'd *Citesius*, and *Gasp. Schottus* in his *Physica Curiosa*, *p.* 408. &c.

Further, we read of seven Ephesian *Boys, who under the persecution of* Decius, *being terrified by his cruelty upon the Professors of the Gospel, did fly away into a Cave, not far from the City* Ephesus, *where they were walled up, and are reported to have slept for the long Night of three hundred years space, till the more pleasant days of* Theodosius *the Emperour, in whose time their Prison-doors were pulled down, and they were awaked out of their miraculous sleep.* This you may find in the applauded *Nicephorus* in his *Ecclesiastical History, lib.* 14. *cap.* 45.

Now let any one judge how probable these are, though I know several of them are credited by some sober, prudent Men. Yet we have but small ground to believe the prodigious Stories of the more remote and darker Ages, and Places of the world, in which both Truth and Knowledge lay long bury'd under a palpable *Cimmerian* Darkness. But we have no ground to disbelieve those Things, which are within the Memory of those latter Days, and the Relations of inquisitive knowing Men, and the sharp Trials of impartial eminent Magistrates.

SECT. III.

HEre I ſhall ſhew you the Poſſibility of it in point of Nature, according to the judgement of *Citeſius*, as above, *Joubert Sennertus*, and *Fortunius Licetus*, with ſome others who have writ on this Subject; whom I mention here once for all, that I may not interrupt you with too frequent Citations, which I know to be a great trouble, and little ſatisfaction to the ordinary Reader.

1. I know very well, that Hiſtory is copiouſly ſtor'd with the true Reports, of ſeveral dull and ſolitary Melancholicks, of many in the more warme parts of the world (which was frequent) and of ſome in the colder Climates, not at all troubled with craſie Heads; who have faſted for ſeventeen, and ſo on to twenty days without deſtruction, or any extraordinary decay to their weak and brittle out-ſides. This hath been an inducement to ſtir up the former wits of the world to ſearch for the ſuſtaining cauſe; but the far larger & more aſtoniſhing Abſtinence of ſome in theſe latter days, hath awak'd the cœtaneous profound Head-pieces of Neighbour Nations, to make a much more deep, and double inquiry into the way of Natures Support: From theſe I ſhall give the following conciſe Account to evince a Poſſibility.

The moſt learned, priſtine, and modern Phyſicians and Philoſophers do ſay, That the great inſtrument of Life, in all Animate beings, is indwelling Natural

Natural heat, which (its poſſible) hath its ſeat in the Bloud. Now, as the Fire feeds upon the combuſtible matter which is adjoyned to it; or as you ſee the lighted Match in the Lamp, or the burning Wick in the Candle, live upon the annexed Oyle or Tallow; ſo doth this Innate-heat within the Body live upon a ſolid, a moiſt, and a ſpiritual ſubſtance; which the later and more experienced Phyſicians do compriſe under the *Humidum radicale & primigenium*: This one would think ſhould preſently be ſpent and conſumed away, without new and freſh ſupplies from Meat and Drink. So then the wonder is, how this Fire ſhould live without its ordinary and obvious Fewel: For where Natural heat is more abundant, as it is in Children and Young Men, there is the greateſt deſire, need, and uſe Meat and Drink.

3. But this you muſt know, that in theſe foodleſſe Creatures, this Natural-heat is reduced to a very ſlender proportion, and ſo can live upon very ſmall ſupplies. As I have ſeen a Candle, confined to a ſpare and thrifty way of burning, by the denſity, or humility, or other deficiency of the ambient Air, continue for ſome hours together, ſending forth flame and light, without any viſible or conſiderable waſte of the Wax or Tallow. Which hath often made me think there might be ſome truth in thoſe many Stories which I have read in ſeveral credited Authors, concerning Lamps now and then

then found in *Italy*, and other places, in ancient Vaults or Urns, which have laſted for many years, that I ſay not Ages, without extinction, till put forth by the purer and ſtronger Air. I know one great cauſe of the duration of theſe Lights, is from the firm make, and laſting conſtitution of the Burning Materials. It is a thing alſo commonly known, that a few ſmall pieces of Flaming-wood, buried under their own Aſhes, will continue fired for a great number of hours, and yet not much conſume away: Some ſay there is found Outlandiſh-wood, that will thus endure for many Months. Now,

4. Thus it is in theſe great Abſtinents, that Natural heat ſeems (as it were) to be raked up under Embers, that it might ſpend it ſelf, and its proper *Pabulum* or food, with the greater Parcimony. Nature doth greatly laviſh, or thruſt forth its own ſupports by Excrements, as, by Stool, Urin, Sweat, Salivation, and the like; but in theſe admirable Faſters all theſe Paſſages are for the moſt part cloſely ſtopped up: And then the Native Fervour (as was ſaid) is brought to ſuch a ſmall Degree, that it may not over-faſt conſume its Aliment. Thus many whoſe years are greatly numerous, can live upon a very ſmall, becauſe they have but little Heat, ſlender Evacuations, and cold and denſe Bodies, and ſo conſequently ſpend the Radical Humours very ſparingly.

5. When

5. When the Cauſe ceaſeth then the Effects muſt needs fall: Now, in theſe Abſtenious Ones its uſually ſo that the deſire and neceſſity of Meat and Drink is taken away; as the Stomack (eſpecially at the beginning) is diſtemper'd, ſtupifi'd, and altogether maſtered and overcome, by the abundant Influx of Pituitous, Crude, and Naughty Humours, ſo that it can neither retain what it had, nor give entertainment to any freſh Suſtenence; and all the Excrementitious Paſſages being ſtopped up, the Body cannot that way Emit or Evaporate any of its inbred Supplies; And it hath been the rational Conjecture of *Delrius*, quoted by *Gaſp. Schottus*, That the 'foreſaid Flegmatick abounding Humours, which firſt took away the Stomack, are afterward made a good uſe of by the Natural heat, in order to the underpropping Life. The Stomack, upon a ſmall recruit, may be enabled to turn theſe to a ſort of *Chyle*, and then the Liver falls to work, and draws them into it ſelf, and preſently transformeth them into Blood, which it ſendeth by the *Vena Porta* into the Body, and all its Members. The knowing *Citeſius* (ſpeaking as I think) concerning the *Chyle*, ſaith, *Attractus ab hepate, qui ventriculi fuit excrementum, fit hepatis alimentum. Abſt. Conſ. p.* 89. For any thing I know, the worſt of humours may be turned by Natures skill and aid to nutriment, not noxious, but uſeful: 'Tis a known Report, that the grand *Mithridates* did gradat m obtain ſuch an Art in eating

ing Poiſon, that his Body became invincible to its greateſt power, as was afterward experienc'd when he ſhould that way have loſt his life. Of which *Martial* the neat *Epigrammatiſt* gives you an account in one of his Diſticks, thus,

Profecit poto Mithridates ſæpe veneno,
Toxica ne poſſent ſæva nocere ſibi.

This humour, which at firſt might be putrid, doth in a little time become ſo tenacious and compact, that it's made very durable to the gentle heat which lives upon it. This the applauded *Sennertus* thinks very probable in his firſt and ſecond thoughts upon the thing in hand, as may be ſeen both in his *Inſtitutions* and *Practick Phyſick*. And when it is once reduced to this ſolidity, and the Volatile Spirits (or Vapours) confined to a fixation, and made to tarry and to do their office, then it is that theſe Meatleſs Creatures have their Lamps pretty well ſupply'd with Oyl, then they do with a greater compoſure ſubſiſt under their total Abſtinence, without deſtruction, though not without decay.

6. Uſually the Bodies of theſe Foodleſſe ones are inwardly in a diſſolving, melting caſe, which diſſolution or conſumption may produce adapted nouriſhment, for Natural heat to live upon. The obſtruction of all external vents, together with the coldneſs of their out-ſides, and the many

many humours that do naturally attend their very Sex, they being usually Women, doth befriend the indwelling Fire with proper Materials for it to live upon.

I think it is indubitable that some such like heat, by a like supply of humid Matter, is the cause why Herbs and Plants live and thrive. As, our Reason lifts us up above all other Animals, so our Sensation gives us what they have; and Vegetation (or the way of the nourishing the humane frame) communicated to us all the advantages which Plants enjoy; to these our Earthy Bodies do carry a great and real correspondence in the manner and matter of their growth, maintainance, and preservation. Doctor *Harvet*, who was learned *Fouberts* Antagonist about the possibility in point of Nature, being reduced to a strait, concerning the *Lucomori*, forementioned, whose brumal Fasting he supposed was unquestionable, he granted, *They did live, but it was onely a Life of Vegetation.* Citet. ubi sup. 151.

7. The most excellent *Zaculus Lucitanus* hath affirm'd, that, though there may be many causes why these are sustain'd alive, yet the in-being, or in-undation of flegmatick humour was the main cause: His own words are, *Etsi non negem a multis causis citrà cibum diutissime homines posse vitam transigere; tamen frequentior, & magis communis est causa, quæ ex abundantia humoris piluitosi elicitur.* De Med. Princ Hist. p. 914.

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The *Fœtus* in the Mothers Womb doth live and thrive after a very ſtrange manner, without either eating or drinking, and (for any thing I know) without emitting any Excrements at all. They live upon a Sanguinal Humour, tranſmitted to them through the Umbeilick Veins.

8. The continual inlet of the humid Air, into the Bodies of theſe by the Mouth and Noſtrils, conveyed by certain ſecret Conduit-pipes into the Heart, and other parts of the *Microcoſme*, may afford ſome ſupplement to the Animal Spirits and remaining Humours.

The conſtant, now undeny'd, Motion of the Blood and Heart, doth very much contribute to the being and life, the act and exerciſe of this innate Heat, and ſo doth conduce exceedingly to fermentation, and this ferment helps in the continuation of life.

9. Thus I have given you a compendious Account of an appearing Poſſibility in Nature it ſelf. Theſe things its true are but barren fare for ſtrong, active, and full Bodies to live upon, but you know theſe, which have been the ſubject of our Diſcourſe, are of weak, languiſh'd, and macerated out-ſides, poor meager, almoſt-dying Carkaſſes; for if them who are of robuſt, chearful, and active Bodies could thus live, I ſhould no more queſtion that Miracles were now in being, then I do that they were ſo in the Prophets and Apoſtles days.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

HEre I ſhall cloſe up this part of the Diſcourſe, by giving you ſome Arguments to prove the vaſt improbability of a *Cheat* in our *Martha*'s caſe; for it has been, and yet is, the inconſiderate (that I may not irrational) Aſſertion of many (ſome of them) not far remote from her, *That ſhe is an undoubted Cheat*, either for the getting gain, or for the advancement of a Faction, or for both of theſe.

The great foundation upon which they built at firſt was the *Ceſſation* of Miracles, the improbability and impoſſibility in point Nature, and their own inacquaintance with what ſome Men of ſplendid and mighty Names had writ in the vindication of this total Abſtinence.

But that *Martha* is no *Cheat* in the mention'd Affair, will appear by the enſuing things.

1. She doth willingly admit of all Viſitors, be they under what ranck or notion ſoever, as the Great, the Learned, the Mean, the Orthodox, and the Erroneous; onely you cannot blame her if ſhe have a care of her *Soul*, wherein ſhe uſed to make the Bible (her uſual *Compa*nion) the *Standard* and Rule of her Faith and Actions, not the private Thoughts of Men of differing Apprehenſions.

2. The plainneſs, or, if you will, the ſimplicity of her Parents; they neither look'd, diſcours'd

cours'd, nor acted, like persons skill'd in Politicks. They did appear to me, and many others upon considerable trials to be among the common rank of Country head-pieces, though they were sober, yet not subtile. They are not so poor, but they can make a very good shift to live without this craft. They did their utmost at the first to make their Daughter eat and drink.

3. *Martha*'s experiences, and approv'd sincerity. Though men of differing humours gave her frequent Visits, yet I never heard of any who knew her well, that could accuse her of a false-hood. She used to tell of every drop of Liquids which she took, and would be offended with them, who out of ignorance did diminish the quantity in their relations of her.

4. The Charity, and strong Testimony of her most considerate Neighbours, among whom I could have given you twenty Names of Note and Observation, had I thought it prudent to have brought them upon the publick Stage.

5. The Drineſſe of her whole Body, her non-evacuation of Excrements, by the lower and larger passages, with the improbability of it, because the Intestines, the Matrix, or the like, were long since ejected and dryed together. These things have been often testified by a great number of Eye-witnesses.

6. The continual Cleaving of her Belly to her Back, in such a close manner, as if they grew together shews sufficiently there can be no interposing meat or Drink. 7. The

7. The Inſpection, and Circumſpection of Phyſitians, Chirurgeons, Mid-wives, and a double Watch that did attend her. The two Watches did conſiſt of forty or threeſcore Women, who did with ſtrictneſs obſerve her night and day by two at a time for ſeveral Weeks at differing ſeaſons: The firſt was ſet by three Neighbour Towns, for their own and the Countries ſatisfaction; the other by the means and appointment of the Right Honourable, and thrice Noble Earl of *Devonſhire*, who did himſelf Viſit her, and did very commendably lay out much care, coſt, and induſtry, to try her to the uttermoſt. Now all theſe, with one common voyce, have given their Vote on *Martha*'s ſide.

I ſuppoſe enough is ſaid to ſatisfie the rational, and it would not fall within the limits of wiſdom to indeavour the ſatisfaction of the contrary ſort of Men.

The Wiſe uſually think, that Abſtruſities in Nature, and the unfrequented and more obſcure Methods in Providence, deſerve the attendance of inquiſition, but not of infidelity. There ought to be a ſuſpenſion of the judgement in things that are dubious, but not a denial of thoſe that are obvious.

PART IV.

Containing Meditations raiſed from the foregoing Diſcourſe for the ſpiritual advantage of the illiterate and ordinary Reader.

THE PROEM.

THE moſt Readers that are in the World may be ranked under four ſorts; the Careleſſe, the Curious, the Catching, and the Conſcientious.

1. The Careleſs reads only (as I may ſay) for the ſake of reading, that they may be eſteemed ſuch as can, and does read: theſe men deſire Letters more then Learning, Praiſe more then Practice, and the Advantage of Carnal Self, more then the Immortal Soul.

2. The Curious, who adore the gold on the Frame, but cares not for the truth or goodneſs of the Glaſs; who reſpect the Colours (the Paint of Nature) more then the fragrant ſmell, or the healing uſe of the Flower: Theſe value Rhetorick beyond Reaſon, and are more taken with the Garniſh on the edges of the Diſh, then with the Meat that lyes upon it: They are more

more for Fancy then Faith, and labour at an higher rate to trim the Head with a few airy Notions, then to try or adorn the Heart with ſolid Matter.

3. The Catching Reader bends his whole ſtudy, and lays out the *all* of that little wit he hath to find, or make faults in the Book he reads, that he may ſcoff the Author, be he never ſo judicious and ſober. 'Tis the *jejune* and empty conjecture of ſome men that they cannot ſhine except all other lights be crouded into darkneſs; they know no better way to make their own Names great, then by diminiſhing the worth of others. But I ſhall leave theſe men to their own happineſs, which only dwells within their own heads.

None of all theſe ſhare in the Deſign of my Labours.

4. The Conſcientious; this good Man reads that he may *live*: He (like *Natures Chymiſt, the Honey-gathering Bee*) deſires to ſuck or extract *Sweet* from every Flower, yea, from the meaneſt Herb he comes neer. He longs to gather ſomething for *God*, and ſomething for the good of his never-dying Soul, from every Line he reads. He condoles and laments over his want of skill, that he cannot ſo read as to edifie himſelf either in *knowledge* or *practice*, by what he reads.

This honeſt, ſerious heart may think, that the fore-going and firſt Parts of this ſmall Treatiſe, are but dry and barren Lines, very little

for *Soul-advantage*. I shall therefore attempt to help this humble Soul by the following *Consectaries*. I would not confine the prudent, skillful Reader, but only indeavour to assist the weak, to whom, if I can but contribute a few sparks of light, he may (its possible) make a new addition of his own, and blow them all up into a pleasant Heat, and refreshing Flame.

CONSECTARY I.

'Tis hence very apparent, that the Providence and Care of God hath not done with the world.

1. AS this sacred Providence looks backward towards eternity, at the foreknowledge and Predetermination of Infinite Wisdome, concerning the future making or management of things in time, so I shall not speak of it; but onely as it refer to the government, and conservation, or preservation of all things or beings, that are in this nether Region, the visible World. This latter is usually called *Actual Providence*, and differs from the other, which is Eternal, as the Execution doth from the Decree, or the forehand-design, from the future acting.

2. This

2. This Actual Providence of *God*, is display'd in the external Works of the matchlesse Wisdome and Power of the ever blessed *Jehovah*, in the creating, ordering, provision, and underpropping of the World, and all its Inhabitants. This sits at the Stern of all sublunary affairs, and sometimes without asking leave of either Wind or Tyde; nay, sometimes in spite of all their opposition it can, and doth conduct it's own Barge (or Vessel, whatever) to the designed Port. This is *Immediate Providence*, when the *Omnipotent*, without Creature-Ministration, doth guide and upphold the Universe, and every thing in it; which shews that his using secondary means is not from any want of power, but the result of his own will and well-ordering Wisdome. This is not a common, but an extraordinary administration of Providence, which thus swims against the Stream, and runs up the steepest Hill, without any fainting at all; which thus works against, or besides, the course or usual order of nature or common actings. This employs it self onely in miraculous Productions. So that I question not, but that the first making of the World was a very stupendious Miracle; to raise so vast a Being out of a former Non-entity to such an huge Lump of substantial matter, fit to make all other terrene Essences out of it.

But I must not bestow time on this, because I do not look upon *Martha Taylor*'s Case as a Miracle.

3. Then there is the *ordinary and usual Providence of God*, which hath the Regiment, Disposal, and sustentation of the World in its own hands; and this is it of which I shall speak with brevity. This, this is the main Spring which moves the whole Wheels of the Creation: This is the weight which makes the Clock of all created concerns strike at a lower or higher rate.

4. Consider the reallity here of its being or exercise. Many have denyed it, and more there are which take little notice of it, but refer all to Nature: These are very unworthy and base to *him* who gave them their first beings; the poor Ethnick World had better thoughts concerning God and Providence. Men that were meer Heathens could spell out Providence from the whispers of their own Conscience, the admirable Order, Tendency, Disposal, Constitution, Mutation, and (foresaid) preservation of all things, and all their actions. To this purpose *Homer* in his Poems written upon *Ulysses*, brings in that wise and valiant *Grecian* Prince, speaking concerning his many and long dangers, upon the rugged churlish Ocean, in this Language.

(Ὀδύσσ. ε)

Ἀυτὰρ ἐμοὶ τὰ φιλεσμεν, ἅπερ Θεὸς ἐν φρεσοὶ θῆκε.

Which

Which doth in the very letter of it signifie, *But in those things I did acquiess (or rest satisfied) which God had appointed in his own mind.* And *Plato* as he is quoted by *Aristotle*, in his *Tract. de Mundo, cap. 7.* saith to this effect, *That God doth hold (or manage) the beginning, middle, and end of all things.* And the learned *Stagyrite* himself declares his mind very fully (*de lib. c. 6.*) *That as all things are from God, so they do all subsist by God; and that if Divine Aid be absent, Nature is not at all sufficient to underprop it self:* Which he illustrates by these apt Allusions, *What the Master or Pilate is to the Ship, what the Driver is to the Cart (or Chariot) and what the Captain is to the Souldiers, &c. that God is to the World.* They that are curious or troubled with that dangerous disease, Atheisme, may satisfie themselves, if they will not put out the Eye of Nature, by an inquiry into *Cicero lib. 2. de Nat. Deorum*, and *Seneca de Providentia ad Lucilium*, and *Galen lib. 3. de usu partium corporis humani.*

It's sad to think that there should be so many men, as there are in our seeing Times, who do either with their Lips or Lives refer all things, and their motions, operations, or miseries, onely to blind Fortune; or rather to a *Stoical* Fate or Destiny, by which they bind over the *Great Creator* unto *second Causes*; and thus they make Him, if any thing, Natures Servant, It hath been (I think) a thousand times over

asserted, *That there is a God, and therefore Providence*; and it's almost as oft repeated, *That to deny actual Providence is to deny God himself.* And yet the foolish *Epicurus* granted that there was a *God*, but denyed Providence; which the learned (*Sophi s*) of all Ages have detected as a base absurdity: One, who was otherways a friend to *Epicurus*, saith, that this was *Epicuri gravissimus lapsus* Cassend. de vit. &c. Epicur.

5. But I suppose I may let these men alone, till the awakening Hand of God make them of another mind. As it did once the bloudy *Caligula* and cruel *Nero*, when the terrifying Thunder-claps of Heaven made them hide their lofty heads, and (to use my Authors words) *agnoscere Deum rebus humanis curare*; they then were forced to speak and acknowledge *that God did exercise care and cognizance in reference to the things of the world.* Horace tells you, by his own mouth, *that it was this angry voice of Heaven, which made him own providence, and throw away the vain and irreligious Notions of* Epicurus. Horl. l. 1. Od. 34.

Thus I have indeavoured to satisfie the Men, who may be of the Heathen-humour, *That infinite wisdome and power doth rule and uphold the world.*

6. This I know is more believed by the Conscientious Christian from the Testimony of one Line in *Holy Writ*, then from a thousand in humane Authors, but yet the great Apostle useth

the

the very ſame means to prove the ſame thing in that full place for the proof of Actual Providence, *Acts* 17 ſpeaking concerning the God that made the world, him who is Lord and Soveraign of heaven and earth, *ver.* 24. He ſaith in the following verſe, *He giveth to all life and breath, and all things: He determineth times, and bounds and habitations: And he is not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our beings*; as certain alſo of *your own Poets* have ſaid, *&c.* Here and twice more in his Epiſtles, *Paul* is pleaſed to make uſe of Heathen Poets (as *Aratus*, *Menander*, and *Epimenides*) to carry on religious deſigns.

Scripture is very clear in the ſetting forth the Providence and Care of God, and therefore he's ſaid, *To work all things*, Epheſ. 1. 11. *By him all things conſiſt*, Col. 1. 17. *He upholdeth all things*, Heb. 1. 3. *And we are enjoyned to caſt all our care on him for he careth for us*, 1 Pet. 5 7. But I ſhall give you one incomparable place which may ſerve for all, *viz. Pſal.* 104. the whole of it, which you may read in your Bibles, and there you cannot but ſee the powerful, wiſe, univerſal, and conſtant actings of *Providence*.

7. Providence is ſeen by the ſerious eye in its moſt common and loweſt acts, as the motion of the Clouds and Winds, the running of the liquid wandring Streams, the moving and livelihood of the wilder Animals, as in that

104.

104. *Pſalm*: Yea, the very Birds of the Aire receive their food at the Hand of God; the beauty and luſtre of the painted Lillies is from a Divine Art; the poor ſilly Sparrow ſtands or falls according to the order of the increated Eſſence; our ordinary Meat and Drink are from God; whoſe glorious Arithmetick hath taken obſervation, and an exact account, of every hair, long or ſhort, which grows upon the Believers Head, *Mat.* 6. 24. to 33. and 10. 29, 30. Though many of theſe meaner things may ſeem never ſo fortuitous or contingent, yet the diſpoſal of them is from the Lord, *Prov.* 16. 33. God is every where preſent, and all things are done by the influence of his Power, ſo that the moſt minute things are by his ſteerage, nothing runs at randome, nor is the product of chance. The Poet (and many others) thought, that Providence was only engaged in the *Magnalia* of the world,

Non vacat exiguis rebus adeſſe Jovis.

But we know that the meaneſt creatures, in all their actions, drive on the ends of an *Infinite Majeſty*, who is wonderful in Counſel, and excellent in Working.

8. The ſound Believer, by intuition and contemplation, ſees God in all things; he's the only man who does practically, and to his comfort, underſtand that old Verſe,

Præſen-

Præsentem monstrat quælibet verba Deum.
Something of God is writ on every grass,
Which careless walkers tread down as they pass.

He's ready to give God the Title to every thing, except ng Sin, for he knows, that he who is the *summum Bonum*, cannot be guil y of that which is the *summum malum*: He permits, orders, and determi es the action, as it is an action, but he cannot possibly have any thing to do with the evil of sin, or the depravity of the Action.

Now, there is few that act l ke the Believer, to see the Hand of Providence in its common and smaller productions.

Though I am sure some among the Heathen Moralists did collect excellent Divinity from this ordinary Manuscript: This was their Scripture, their Theology. *The ordinary effects of Nature wrought more Admiration in them, then the most of Christ's Miracles did among the Jews.*

Many of them knew better how to conjoyn the Mystical Letters of the Creation, then the heedlesse Professors of this Age, who trample under foot the most obvious and most significant Hieroglyphicks, without drawing one conclusion from them, for Soul-advantage, or the honour of God. But,

9. There

9. There are the more ſpecial and ſignal acts-ings of this Providence, when it does diſplay it ſelf in ſome or other ſingular things; and this has the greateſt obſervation beſtow'd upon it. The moſt illuſtrious Lamp of *Heaven* is as really in being when it is obſcured by the darkeſt Cloud, as it when it ſendeth forth its radiant and cleareſt Beams; yet only then the beholders eye gives it the moſt enlarg'd obſervance. So it is in the matter of Actual Providence, when it improves the meaneſt helps to great advantage, when it makes *ſecond cauſes* in their loweſt Ebbe, bear up and carry forward very weighty actions; when it doth in a more hidden method draw ſtreight Lines by crooked Rules, and in a Cryptick way, give ſufficient ſupport to humane Bodies, under great diſtempers by very ſmall ſupplies, then its moſt taken notice of.

Hitherto we may refer the moſt, if not all, the ſeeming Miracles of theſe lattes Ages of the World. Which have been actions not done altogether beyond the power of Nature, or in a total contradiction to natural cauſes, but Nature mightily improved, ſupported, or ſucceſs'd by the holy skill and Art of ſacred Providence, and ſo they may deſervedly be called *wonders*, though they have not been advanced ſo high as to be undoubted Miracles.

Thus

Thus we are come to *Martha Taylors* case, which was beyond controversie a more then ordinary discovery of the Care and Providence of God; whence you may read the ground of my first thoughts, *That the Care and Providence of God hath not done with the world.* All that have seen her, or heard her story, have presently set the Crown upon the Head of Providence.

10. I shall here close up this with a word of Apology, for the length of this Consectary, and an engagement to greater brevity in those that follow.

Some father every thing upon Providence, others nothing, or the next to nothing. Some are ready to refuge themselves in it, as if it were a proper *Asylum* for their Enormities; others steal all away from it, and offer it up at the Shrine of Fate, the starry Influence, or any thing before they will come to the *Door of God.* As there is no need for us to look over, or deny second causes (especially) in natural actions, for this would be presumption and a tempting of God: So there is no need of tying God to give always attendance to *second causes* in the ordinary method, degree, or way of managing them; *He is a most free, wise, and powerful Agent*; whatsoever he useth (as was said before) is not upon the account of his own weakness, but upon the acount of his own will, which is sacred and not to be disputed.

That

That I might ſomething open theſe things was the aim of the antecedaneous Particulars, as alſo to lay a fair foundation for ſeveral of the following ones; and in the laſt place that I might demonſtrate I had no deſign to derogate the *glory of Heaven*, or to eclipſe the *Beauty of Providence*; for I am one that dare not diſown my God, and bow the Head to the Name of Nature; which I had ſo often occaſion to uſe in the firſt and ſecond Parts. I dare not put Nature up into the Throne with God, as the ſmooth Poet ſeems to do, ſpeaking concerning the rude and formeleſs *Chaos*, where the ſeeds of things ſeemed to the eye of ſenſe to be jumbled up together in an undigeſted Lump or *Embrio*, where he ſaith (*Metamorph. lib.* 1. *fab.* 1.)

Hanc Deus, & Melior litem Natura diremit.

For I know nature to be *Gods ſervant*, and that it carries on his deſigns, and is actuated by his Providence; this is it which directeth the operations of all individuals and ſingle Eſſences.

There are many Relations in Sacred Hiſtory, not carried beyond the bounds of Providence in the uſe of means, that are ſo full of Labyrinths and various turnings, that they were able to convert a Stoick. If you would have an inſtance, you may read over the ſtories of *Joſeph* and

and *Moses*; where you may find many doublings, and redoublings; vast thwartings, and improbabilities, which were not the effects of Chance; neither were they loose and straggling, as they seem'd to be, but all of them had a real tendency, to their own and *Israel*'s advancement.

Let this suffice to demonstrate the exercise of the Care and Providence of God; which will be further opened by what ensues.

CONSECT. II.

That humane unlikelihoods, or supposed improbabilities in the course of Nature, cannot hedge up the way against Omnipotency.

1. I Shall not speak to this glorious Attribute of God, as it is considered Absolutely and in an Extraordinary way; for thus every act of it is a Miracle, thus it works without means, contrary to means, and above all means: This is altogether Independent and Unlimited, and therefore it is Infinite, and can do every thing which doth not imply a Contradiction or imperfection; for these are the result of Weakness, not of Power; nay, therefore it is Omnipotency, because it cannot (if I may use the word cannot) do these things which argue Impotency. But,

2. That

2. That which I design in this Conſectary, is the ordinary or actual power of God; and that as it doth ſometimes manifeſt it ſelf in the accompliſhment of very great Actions, by weak and low Means. As in the combate between young *David*, and that mighty man of war *Goliah*; to ſee the unarmed *David*, in his blooming day, over-come and throw-down at his feet that moving Rock, the mighty Champion of the *Philiſtines*, hedged round about with braſs or ſteel. This is the reaſon why five may chaſe an hundred, and the latter number put a thouſand unto flight; why the weak things of the world confound them that are mighty, and things which are not, bring to nought things that are.

3. It is the ſame mighty Hand of God by which this lower and ſolid Globe is ſo firmly fixed in the middle of the moving yeilding air. Is it not a very unlikely thing that ſuch a vaſt heavy body as the Earth is (round by nature and ſo fitted for motion) ſhould keep its Center ſo many thouſands of years without tumbling out of its place.

Terra pilæ ſimilis, nullo fulcimine nixa,
Aere ſublimi tam grave pendet onus.

The World hath no other prop but the inviſible hand of Heaven, *Job* 26. 7. & 38. 6.

4. But

4. But to keep close to the thing in hand; this Almighty Power doth ſtep over all the Improbabilities that ſtand in the way of it, when it doth uphold the human body, without the external Uſe of Creature-help. What a wonderful thing is it, to ſee a poor tattering Clay-houſe keep its foundation, and remain not beaten down, when ſtrong and violent Storms drive againſt it! to ſee poor worm-eaten Clay-Walls ſtand out againſt the ſtern Encounters of the ſtrongeſt Winds, without any viſible ſupports; nay, to ſee theſe abide unbattered down, when they have no foundation but the Duſt, not the firm Earth, nor the Rock, but the looſe and moving Duſt, which every little Puff of Air blows away before it! *Job* 4. 19. This muſt of neceſſity be aſcrib'd to the curious and adored Art, of the Great *Maſter-Builder* of the World.

5. There lay many Improbabilities in the way of *Martha Taylor*'s Life; whole Troops of Diſtempers, for ſeveral of the beginning Months, did almoſt conſtantly ſcale the Walls, of the Souls crazy Habitation; and then ſhe did altogether abſtain from Meat, Drink, or Cordials; ſo that all that were round about her, expected her dying every day: How can we then but ſay, *That underneath were everlaſting Arms!*

6. What a ſtrange thing it is, that the Body ſhould live only upon Nature's coſt and charges; and have no proviſion to ſubſiſt upon, but what it makes within its own Doors. How unlikely is it, that a little Flegm, Rheum, moiſt Humours, and ſuch like things, ſhould be the real ſupply of Life; as far as it is upheld by ſecond cauſes! for the Bodies of the

moſt healthful and ſtrong Men, which are beſt able to make a ſufficient uſe of Meat and Drink, are not preſerved alive only by theſe ſecond cauſes; for it is *in God we live, move, and have our beings*, and *by him all things conſiſt*, and *he upholds all things by the word of his power.*

7. As Infinite Wiſdom is the Eye, ſo this truly admirable Power of God is the Hand of that moſt vigilant Providence which conducts us ſafe through a thouſand Dangers and Miſeries which we are continually ſubject to between our Cradle, and our Graves. Man is born unto trouble as the ſparks fly upwards, *Job.* 5. 7 What a wonderful ſtory is that of *Paul* concerning himſelf, 2 *Cor.* 11? *I was.... in priſons more frequent, in ſtripes above meaſure, in deaths oft, once I was ſtoned, thrice I ſuffered ſhipwrack, a night and a day I have been in the deep In perils of robbers, in perils by my own Country men, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderneſs, in perils in the Waters, in perils among falſe brethren, in wearineſs and painfulneſs, in watchings often, in hunger and thirſt, in faſtings often, in cold and nakedneſs:* And yet *Paul* lived through all theſe. Who (but an Atheiſt) would not ſtand here and admire, and adore the wonderful Power and Providence of God! *Scultetus* ſpeaking concerning himſelf, ſaith, *Totum vitæ meæ curriculum plenum eſt mirandarum divinarum liberationum ex magnis morbis, periculis, calamitatibus; nullum elementum, eſt, à quonon infeſtatus ſum.* Præfat. ad curric. vitæ.

8. This

8. This Power of God is the Hindg upon which the whole courſe of Nature turneth; nay, it is the Hand that moves it. It's the ſaying of one, very pertinent in this caſe, That it is notwith the work of God as with the Artificers Clock, which put into a Frame and hang'd with weights, will go, though the Artificer be off from it; but though God ſet all the Creatures in frame, yet the motion of every wheel depends on God: There is not a drop of rain falls till God utter his voice, and cauſe the vapours to aſcend from the ends of the earth, *Jer.* 10. 13.

The groaning Creation which travels in birth to be delivered of ſin, (*Rom.* 8. 22.) had been long ſince up in Armes againſt the great Rebel, Man, who was the cauſe of all its Miſeries, had not the interpoſition of an Infinite Arm, cauſed it lie down with quietneſs. The angry and churliſh Ocean had many an Age ago broke over its weak and ſandy Bounds, and had for certain entomb'd the Earth, and all Inhabitants within its own boſom, had not the Omnipotent confin'd it to the Womb of his Decree, wrapt it up within the ſwadling-bands of darkneſs, and ſtill'd it by rocking it in the Cradle of his Providence; as you may ſee *Job* 38.8,9,10,11.

SECT. III.

Infinite Wiſdom now and then chuſeth forth ſome of the meaneſt things to do its mighty Works upon.

1. I Have read of very many who have been brought under a total Abſtinence, and continually lived

for many Moneths or Years, together without either Meat or Drink; and all of theſe have been of ordinary, if not poor and low, Original. Some of the moſt curious Artiſts of them who have been moſt profoundly learned, who have ſhone in their differing Spheres as Starrs of the firſt Magnitude, have taken their riſe from the loweſt ground, and have been only of vulgar Extraction.

This Wiſdom, at the Creation of the World, made choice of the meaneſt Duſt as a convenient Material, out of which to make the moſt ennobled ſublunary Creature: So that the moſt Rational and Magnanimous Men that are in the World, are (as to their out-ſide) but moving lumps of Clay, meer walking heaps of congealed Atoms.

2. As to Spirituals; very many of them who have been famous for Religion and Holineſs, have ſprung from the Plow and Diſtaff. The Image of God has often been very ſplendid when it has only hung in a plain and homely Frame. I could name you an hundred Martyrs and precious Saints, whoſe Revenues have not amounted to a Farthing by the yea

Ruffinus in his Eccleſiaſtick Hiſtory, tells of a poor Captive-Woman, who, by her exceeding holy life, and abſtinence, as well as other means, was the occaſion and inſtrument of converting the Nation inhabiting *Iberia*.

The holy and bleſſed Apoſtles, who made the whole World ring with Wonders, were at the firſt but ordinary Men, only illiterate Mechanicks.

This now is much for the advance of Infini

Wiſdom; for God hath (for this end) choſen the fooliſh, weak, and mean things of the World, to confound (or ſhame) the wiſe, the ſtrong and noble. 1 *Cor.* 1.26,27,28, 29,31. *James.* 2.5. *Eccleſ.* 9. 15. *Magnates non ſemper ſapientes.*

SECT. IV.

That Spiritual Comforts may be enjoyed, and Serious Holineſs exerciſed, under great and continued Bodily Afflictions.

1. *That Spiritual Comforts may be enjoyed under Bodily Afflictions*, was evidenced in our *Darbyſhire Damſel*, who was uſually of a Serene Temper, as to her Mind; the Sun did uſually ſhine, after the firſt Storms were over; I ſeldom or never heard of the gathering of Clouds again.

This ſweet Flower grows not in every Believer's Garden, eſpecially in the Winter-ſeaſon. To have Peace within Doors, when all is War without, is a very excellent and rare thing. Few Children uſe to rejoyce when they are whipt, though it be by a Father's Hand, and that for their advantage; the moſt give Grief a free Dominion, and ſend forth Sighs and Sobs to bear witneſs how they are affected. But,

2. All are not of this Drooping, or Diſcontented Conſtitution; for, ſome there are, who can drown all external Sorrows, under the pleaſant Streams of that Joy they have within: Thus you find *Peter* and his Fellows, after they had been im-

pri-

priſoned, threatned, whipt, and commanded, to ſpeak no more in the Name of *Jeſus, departing from the preſence of the Councel, rejoyced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame, Act.* 5. 41. So the Apoſtle of the Gentiles ſaith, *We glory in tribulations, Rom.* 5. 3. Many of thoſe ever worthy and renowned Witneſſes, who ſealed the Goſpel with their Blood, who mounted Heaven in a Fiery Charriot, who afforded the Clay-lodgings of their Souls to the undeſerved malice of their Adverſaries, to make Bond-fires on, for the Glory of the Truth: Many (I ſay) of theſe Witneſſes, did run to, and kiſs the Stake, meet the Fire with kind Embraces, and ſing and triumph in the Flames, whiles their Bodies were burning down to aſhes.

3. *Serious Holineſs may be exerciſed under great and continued corporal Diſtempers.* Stars may, nay do, ſhine brighteſt in the darkeſt night: The Lilly looks the more lovely, for growing among the Thorns. The real Saint uſually makes miſery amiable, by a lovely pious deportment. The true Believer having a right underſtanding of that of the ancient Worthy of the Church, *Periiſſem, niſi periiſſem*, can with comfort write for his *Motto, Sit miſer, qui miſer eſſe poteſt, 2 Cor.* 4. 8. 9. & 6. 10. I am ſure *Martha Taylor* was moſt eminent, when ſhe was moſt under trouble, in the year, 1668. We had once, a rare Engliſh Matron, who lying under great Afflictions of Body, lamented the recovery out of them, becauſe of that Heart-warming Communion, ſhe enjoyed with God under them; and ſhe was afraid, that the warmer and

more

more parching Influences of the Sun of Prosperity would cause those tender Plants to wither, which the quickening Showrs of Affliction, had but a little before made to spring and grow. Prosperity makes Weeds to grow in the exuberant Flesh, but adversity doth τὸ ὑπωπιάζειν τὸ σῶμα, beat or club down this body; that this slave may not rule over its lord, the Soul.

SECT. V.

We gather how imprudent, yea, how much beneath a life of faith it is, to lay our expectations, hopes, or dependance upon the Creature.

Either the ordinary streams of the Creature may be dried up, or, if they run so as to fill the Banks, we may be made incapable (as in *Martha's* case or otherways) to make any use of them at all. The wise and great Disposer of these Earthly Enjoyments, doth sometimes either withdraw the Table, or else wholly take away our Appetite, that we may see our happiness doth not lie in these things. To depend upon the Creature, is to lean upon a bruised Reed, to underprop Hopes and Expectation with a rotten Post, yea, to lay the Foundation upon the Sand, and raise an imaginary Castle in the air, where we may think to supply and save our selves when wants and dangers are abroad. When the Creature is most full and overflows, yet it's but a fallible enjoyment. Meat and Drink, Houses and Lands, Honours and Pleasures, and Riches, and the smiles of Grandees, are as poor empty Bubbles, meer impertinent Cyphers; set a thousand of these together, and they all signifie nothing, without God stand by them. *Sit not down in*

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the dust: never desire a childs portion in this barren Land.

SECT. VI.

This invites us to the boundless and unconfin'd Creator seeing the Creature is now and then so useless.

WHether the World wax or wane, whether it ebb or flow, God is still the same to them that fear him. Come, Fondlings, come, and throw the world out of your Arms, and take up God. Do not say as that vile *French* Cardinal once did, *That he would not exchange his part in Paris for his part in Paradise.* Let not the Creature prevail over the brutish Appetite, but be so wise as to make an advènture for an Happiness not known to Sense. *Psal.* 73.25,26,27,28. The Sun of Righteousness is compleatly able to make it day to the true Believer, though all the Stars of Creature-comforts should creep under a cloud, and disappear, *Psal.* 36.7,9. & 44. 6,8. & 121.1,2. *Hab.* 3.17,18. *Phil.* 3.8. The Channels and visible Cisterns may be dry; make sure work then, you have the Key to the Fountain head. 'Tis no Paradox to say, *That the man who enjoys God hath all things when he hath nothing.*

Qui habet habentem omnia, habet omnia.

The good *Musculus*, a man often poor enough, was many times compell'd to fetch meat, drink, and clothing out of the following double Meeter,

Est Deus in cœlis, qui providus omnia curat;
Credentes nunquam deseruisse potest.

God is in Heaven, who doth care for all,
Lets but believe, and we shall never fall.

When streams are lowest, and the Creature gone,
Let's then be satisfi'd in God alone.

FINIS.